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V. E. ORLANDO



WAR SPEECHES

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# WAR SPEECHES



VITTORIO EMANUELE ORLANDO

PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

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# WAR SPEECHES

*WITH PREFACE*

**BY ORAZIO RAIMONDO**

MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

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**Translated by**  
**F. S. ARNOLD**

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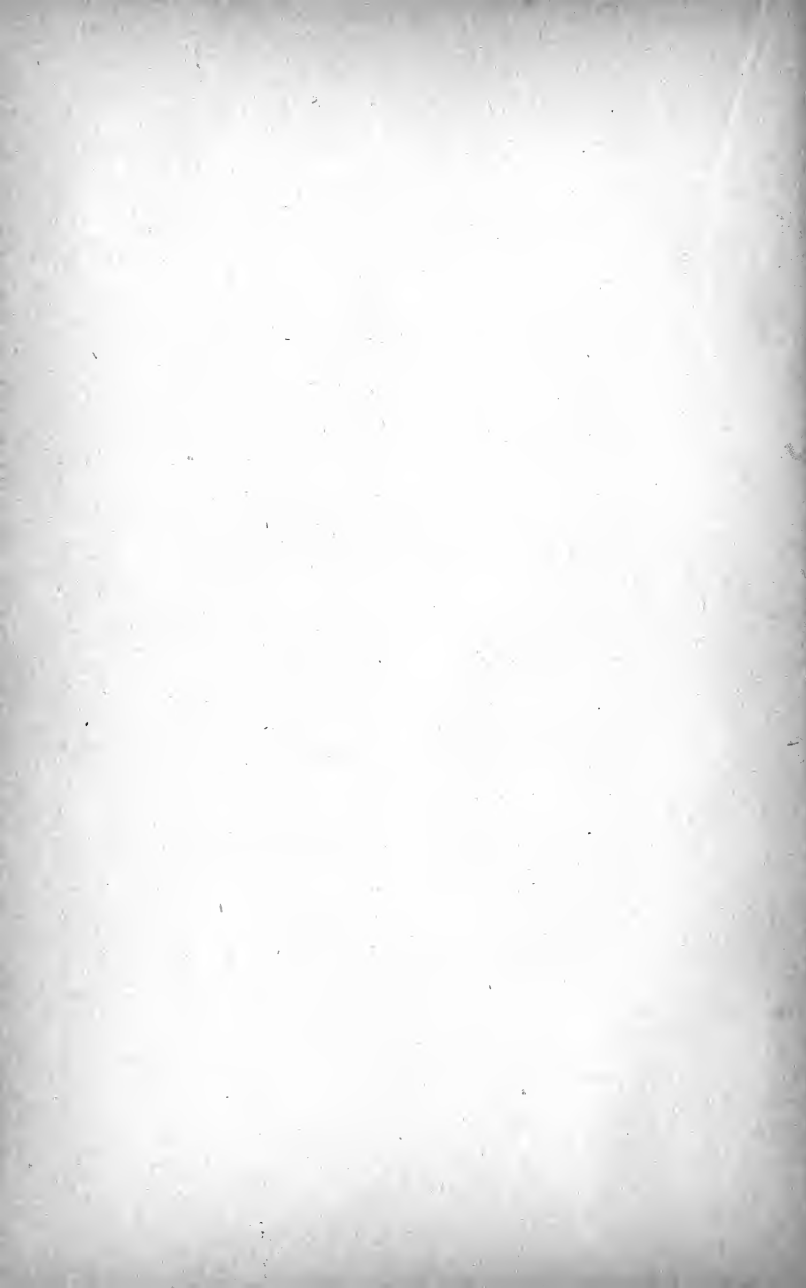
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## PREFACE

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*The volume we present to the reader contains the complete collection of the speeches delivered by V. E. Orlando during the last few years, from his defence of the war at Palermo to his glorification of the victory before Parliament.*

*The idea of collecting Signor Orlando's speeches originated many months back, when Italy was engaged in a mortal duel and it seemed that a lofty word of faith, spread abroad among the people and borne beyond the borders to the vast Italian family scattered throughout the world, might revive our hopes, strengthen our hearts, and hasten on the triumph of the right over the persistent hostility of destiny, the justifiable anxiety of the many who had faith no more, and the ambiguous agitation of the few who strayed among the ruins, awaiting the advent of their class or the restoration of their own private fortune.*

*But the task we had undertaken proved far more difficult than we had imagined.*

*Signor Orlando does not write his speeches, except*

*when he has to make solemn declarations in the name of the Government or to deal with very delicate matters when every word must be well-weighed. Even the revision of his speeches in Parliament is made in haste, and his corrections are limited to a few slight and superficial touches here and there. His other numerous speeches circulated in the newspapers are mutilated, and not unseldom corrupt, failing even to convey his thought. We have had, then, to undertake a patient work of research and in some cases, of reconstruction, in which Signor Orlando, like all born orators, has been able to lend us an aid that has been very limited and not over-tractable.*

*The difficulties we met with at every step have delayed the publication of the volume; and when the day of triumph came, we were still busy seeking for the text of several speeches, which, though improvised at the close of a dinner or before a large crowd, bore none the less the most marked and genuine impress of their author.*

*But was all this toil spent on speeches destined to an ephemeral existence, the echoes of which are to lose themselves amid the tumult of the changes of things, in endless flux and reflux?*

*Nay, this book, though of no vast size, sums up in its pages four years of the political life of Italy, four years that have been to us as a century, so gigantic are the events in them of which we have been now the actors and now the witnesses.*

*We would fain have every Italian read and ponder*

it. Even if the war had brought with it no material benefit, it would yet remain a moral fact of enormous importance, since from it issues definitely formed our national consciousness. We Italians were not curious over our history. Oppressed by the rhetoric our race had inherited from a fantastic Roman tradition, we felt not the spiritual need of wrenching from centuries past the enigmas of our slavery and of our revolt against it. Lightly we cast upon the sway of the foreigner the responsibility for our calamities. We realized not what was left in us from epochs overpassed. Absorbed in the contemplation of a few grand figures, around whom, — with the balance with which our race is so exquisitely gifted, — all difference of opinion, all party bitterness swiftly melted away, we made a faulty and arbitrary valuation of the national forces. We passed with unjustifiable rapidity from the intoxication of pride to the baseness of discouragement. Fawningly we accepted all that came from abroad, — goods and doctrines, — without examining whether they were adapted to our taste and to our genius. We must in truth admit that our subjection to the foreigner had not been cut short by the wars of independence.

There are those who have been found to say: «Happy are the peoples who have no history». But no one would dare to assert, even from love of paradox: «Happy are the peoples who know no history». For from having

*sinned against history, the peoples have often rushed headlong into convulsions and catastrophes.*

*Was it not an enormous crime against history, this war stirred up by Germany to found her universal hegemony over a Europe reduced to the most desolate uniformity, when a wide-spread sentiment of independence revealed its peoples ready to die rather than endure subjection?*

*And was not another enormous crime against history the Communists', when they became possessed with the illusion that they could constrain society within the fettering canons of a pre-established theory? From the just premise that accomplished facts always represent a necessity from the hour they are accomplished, the false inference has been drawn that they could not have been accomplished otherwise, and we have created for ourselves the law of a mysterious fatality that broods over us, and against which human reason is powerless to contend, granting ourselves, however, this faith in consolation, that this fatality acts in the sense of a progress continuous and without end. No: fatality exists not: in reality, all that exists is our errors. The history of mankind is, in its essence, the history of the errors made by man.*

*When Peace returns to reign among the nations, many minds will feel themselves impelled to exclaim, «Not for this!» — and with our Latin fickleness we shall be impelled to condemn all that offers itself to our spirit as a cause, even remote, of our delusion. Well then, if*



*in his discouragement and his bitterness there be some one of our number who lends his ear, without wonder and without protest, to him who denies his fatherland, let him turn to these pages, where the cry of the fatherland smitten breaks forth in lyric strain heart-stirring, Let the young turn to them above all, the young who in our schools are being educated in letters after the precepts of the academy, and they will find in these pages a model of vivid and impassioned eloquence, despite the flaws inseparable from an art that scorns to bedizen and beautify itself before the mirror, an eloquence that vigorously affronts tragic difficulties, that towers above obstacles, that abandons itself to swift surges of sentiment when it makes appeal to those obscure moral forces which alone give to an army and to a people the courage that is without reason and without hope, an eloquence that triumphs, compelling its hearers to a state of mind and a state of soul, — in other words, persuasion and emotion.*

*Besides this English rendering of the Italian text, there is also a French translation.*

*Our foreign friends and allies, whether inspired by a traditional sympathy for the fair land of Italy, or infected haply by that distrust which reveals itself sometimes in their very words of eulogy, will do well to linger for a season over the speeches of Signor Orlando. They will learn from our Prime Minister's words the loftiness of soul of our people, who «knew hunger, but knew not dishonour». The moral grandeur of a people is measured*

*more truly than by its wealth or the vastness of its territory, by the nobility of the language with which is need to speak to it in the tragic hours of its existence. Not even in the wildest raging of adversity was there a moment when the people of Italy had the thought to provide for its own safety by abandonment and by treachery.*

*Italy may go calmly to meet the judgment of posterity. Humiliated by thirty years of subjection disguised under the name of alliance, defamed by her old allies and often ill-understood by the new, she has nought to fear for her honour. Her cause was already won in the face of history before the valour of her sons consecrated its abiding triumph. And if indeed it is true that the fortune of arms does not alone suffice to win for a people a lofty task of guidance in the work of civilisation, we may yet have confidence that the most marked characteristics of our people, — their indomitable tenacity in labour, their frugal temperance in habit, the swiftness of their intuition, and their sense of human solidarity, — will insure them one of the most honourable posts in the family of the most advanced among the Nations.*

*We, perchance, shall not behold the bright meridian of our Fatherland. Our mission is to consecrate what of life remains to us, to the healing of the wounds left in its frame by the cruel war. But we have the surety that the glory will come. A few short years. and the last survivors of this brilliant generation of unbelievers, cast in such unforeseen wise by Fate into the heroic epopœia,*

*will fade from sight in their turn in the footsteps of those who have preceded them, bearing with them to the tomb, together with the fraudulent mirage of their hope and the acrid revel of their regret, the wondrous store was theirs of thoughts and of dreams.*

ORAZIO RAIMONDO.

(Member of the Chamber of Deputies).



# ON THE MEASURES FOR THE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY DEFENCE OF THE STATE

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*Chamber of Deputies, March 14th 1915.*

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Sig. V. E. ORLANDO, Minister of Justice —  
To discharge as little unworthily as may be the task assigned to me, I must necessarily speak in a minor key; as before an assembly whose function is general discussion, I have to defend a law eminently technical. It is true that juridical technicality from its very nature must not and cannot exclude a political element: every juridical question is *ipso facto* also a political question. But if I may be permitted a somewhat academic expression, it will be an inferred political element, which will draw its origin from the relation the bill before us and the question under discussion bear to matters so grave as the penal repression of certain acts and the organisation and military defence of the State.

Some honourable members, on the other hand, have brought politics into the question, not in this dependent sense, but quite independently: the bill has been made the occasion for speaking of Heaven knows what. Of course, I am perfectly aware, — and pray let no one imagine that underneath these words of mine there lurks some veiled sting of censure, far less of irony, — I am perfectly aware, I say, that, in the tragic hour we are traversing, when it is a question of that duty of coercion which we all must feel, but

most of all we on whom is laid so terrible a responsibility, well, such coercion of a man's sentiments naturally irritates to resistance, and the unbridled expression of sentiments. But obviously, I am here to discuss the bill we have laid before you; and so I really must decline to follow my honourable friend, Signor Ciccotti, in the excursions which, in what I hasten to term his vigorous and eloquent speech, he has made into the classic realm of Pindar and the romantic realms of the River Nymphs, wafted on the scented gales of that Favonius of his, whose coinage, so to speak, he has reissued, after it had been for some time out of circulation. (*Laughter.*)

We can assert, with the clearest conscience, that for what some people have been pleased to call « bluff » — and which cannot be translated by the single word « dust-throwing », — I really must resort to the paraphrase « riding the high horse with a decided strain of hoaxing »: — (I say « strain » advisedly, mindful of that cardinal you wot of), (*Laughter*): — for this charge of bluff we have given no reasonable ground whatsoever.

The title of the bill has been criticised. One honourable Member (Sig. Petrillo) called it Tartarinesque: and others have referred to it as ill describing the bill's purport or again as seemingly framed on purpose to bring about this debate, — which in a certain sense, I admit, is out of proportion to the contents of the bill.

Well, as chance would have it, — (these are the little hints we get from history), — this title « Measures for the Economic and Military Defence of the State », is the original title, the title given to the very first instance of a measure of this kind, when in 1896 it was laid before the House by the then minister, Signor Costa. You see, then, that the « bluff », if bluff there be, was devised by our lamented and illustrious predecessors. (*Comments: Interruption from the Extreme Left.*)

I was not aware that the year 1896 bore the brand of reactionary. (*Interruption from the Extreme Left.*)

In any case, I want to make clear at once, that I shall discuss nothing that is not relative to the bill before us. As to all else, the reply has already been given, and may be given again, by the President of the Council, with the eloquence which an honourable member (Sig. Martini) threw such fair light on in that interruption which no doubt he has not forgotten: « He says nothing; because just at this moment he has nothing to say ».

Sig. A. SALANDRA, President of the Council, — Then they have had their answer. (*Laughter.*)

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — One word on a point I ought to deal with before proceeding further. Is this an exceptional law? And, being exceptional, is it not therefore a temporary one, as two honourable members (Sigg. Agnelli and Marchesano) told us and as another (Sig. Bentini) maintained, — though with a qualification for which I am grateful to him, — at the close of his vigorous and impassioned speech? Well, I assert most emphatically that this law was not proposed by the Government, is not now upheld or understood by them, as an exceptional law. (*Comments. Interruption from the Extreme Left.*)

Sig. LABRIOLA — It 's worse than that!

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — Be it so: we are of a different opinion.

Sig. MARCHESANO — The report says quite the reverse.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — The report, let me remind the honourable member, says but this: « The exceptional state of things throughout the world at this moment, has literally created some of these questions; while others, linked with needs of the State long since forced upon our attention, have been thrust by the present crisis into exceptional relief ». This seems to me clear as day. The questions newly created are the questions relating to the prohibi-

tion of exportation. And I state this explicitly farther on. But I am not fond of quoting from myself. I do not find my own works interesting reading.

This is not, I say, an exceptional law. I differ, then from the honourable member (Sig. Labriola) and, I regret to say, from several other honourable members in that part of the House (*pointing to the Left*). Well, this is my opinion: and if you will be good enough to follow my argument, I hope to prove to you that I am right.

In our opinion it is a law that fills up a gap in our legislation which owes its origin to the disproportion between the measures for the repression of the criminal acts in question and the social conditions amid which these criminal acts have their operation.

### The crime of espionage.

The spy-system is as old as war itself: but espionage in time of peace, scrutinising for long years the military organisation and preparations of the nation spied upon in all their minutest details, the espionage that has to be carried on day by day, preparing by its harvest of intelligence that which may mean, later on, the issue of future campaigns, the espionage, in short, this bill aims at repressing; — this is a phenomenon of the most recent development.

This is easily proved. The codes that preceded the present code of 1889 neither foresaw nor punished espionage in time of peace. And this was not from any lofty principle of liberalism; — (as the ministry of 1896 has not been found immaculate. I suppose you will not credit with any vast degree of liberalism the framers of the Penal Codes that preceded Zanardelli's): — it was simply because there was no such phenomenon to repress.

The thing came into being after the war of 1870, after the system began of wars with huge masses: — wars be it known to the honourable member (Sig. Bentini) —



(and very sorry I am it is so, for were it otherwise, what a gain would it be to the grand qualities possessed by us of Latin race), — wars in which are of far less avail the lofty impulse to strive ever after a grand ideal or the flash of genius of a great strategist, — (and we of Latin race may be proud of an uninterrupted tradition of such genius), — of far less avail all these, and far more a preparation for war, highly technical, minute, slowly and methodically accomplished.

And this is the preparation that is lain in wait for and spied upon, — unless we are prepared to deny that nearly all civilised States, — (unfortunately the epithet is in this connection not too appropriate), — that all civilised States in our day have a most elaborately organised system of espionage in time of war. (*Interruption by Sig. Labriola.*)

Let me warn honourable members that now-a-days there is nothing, excuse me if I say, more stupidly presumptuous than to think oneself and one's friends the sole depositaries of national wisdom.

The simultaneous legislative changes in all the nations which have attained the same level of civilisation, this in itself should be full of instruction to us.

Note, then, this coincidence, which is certainly no mere accident. About the year 1890, we observe the first signs of a change in the juridical conception of delicts of espionage, manifesting itself in the simultaneous legislation with which began the repression of espionage in time of peace. And it is at this epoch we meet with the French law of 1886, the Russian law of 1892, the English law of 1899, our own Penal Code of 1889, and the German law of 1893.

Well, consider this simultaneous legislative activity in all the States, when they became aware of a sort of clandestine surveillance, treacherously spying into their military preparations, and therefore took measures to defend themselves against the snare by

incorporating into their legislation special penal enactments.

But — (and this is still more noteworthy) — the hostile agencies at work in this sphere of action rapidly outgrew the legislative measures, and a few years after, and simultaneously once more, all the States discover that these defensive measures of theirs are inadequate; and you have in Russia following on the law of 1892 the code of 1903, in which the penalties for delicts are severer and their number greater: and the same thing happens in that most liberal of States England, in 1911, and in Germany in June 1914, only a few months before the bursting out of the great conflagration.

And mark this: — in the second period, — (for in the first preparatory period what we note is simply this, — all the nations have laws for the repression of espionage in time of peace), — in the second period, when the need is felt to strengthen the defences still more, you find a distinction in the group of the six great European Powers, a distinction not between the more liberal peoples and the less liberal, — (for we find England among the States that make a second law still more severe for the repression of espionage), — but a distinction of racial characteristic.

It is the two Latin peoples who do not make a new and severer law. Projects to this end abound in Italy and in France, but they do not lead to any legislation, and for the reason that the Latin race is of the character described by an honourable member, (Sig. Ciccotti) yesterday: — of a character facile, confiding, that lets things go on, that lets things slide, aye, that would even now refuse to adopt the measures necessary for the defence of the nation, because it is attracted, fascinated by the eloquence of the honourable member (Sig. Bentini), eloquence that almost made me repent, myself, of having laid this bill before you. (*Hear, hear, and laughter*). And with regard to this law of ours, as an honourable member (Sig. Lucci) re-

proached me for laying before you a bill with clauses severer and harsher than those he quoted from, — among others, the English law...

Sig. LUCCI — The French.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — Excuse me: I made a note of it at the time. You quoted the French law, the Russian law and the English law.

Well, let me tell you what the English law enacted in 1911.

Let us take first a case foreseen and provided for in our bill, and then a case not provided for in our bill, but provided for in the English law.

In the first clause of their Act of 1911, — (the *Official Secrets Act*), — you will find these words: —

« Whosoever with intent to do injury to the security and to the interests of the State » — (it corresponds to our Clause 13) — « shall approach a place prohibited under the provisions of this Act, or shall be found loitering in the vicinity thereof », — (I should say that the term « prohibited place », as defined in their Clause 3, not only includes all works of defence, arsenals, manufactories, and so on, but is held to cover also any place whatsoever, whether Crown property or not, where are being constructed or repaired material or instruments of war, etc., etc., all the railways, roads, canals, and other means of communication by sea and land), — « shall be liable to penal servitude for a term of not less than three years or more than seven ». —

And our penalty for this is — from one year to three. (*Animated Comments*).

And now let me call the honourable member's attention to the 7th Clause in the English law: — « Whosoever » — (it is a form of delict which had not occurred to us, or rather, to be more precise, which we did not think advisable to put into our bill), — « Whosoever knowingly and wittingly shall harbour a person whom he knows » — (well, so far so good), — « or whom he has just cause or reason to suspect,

to be intent on committing any one of the acts contemplated by this law... shall be liable to a penalty...»

Do you follow me? Whosoever shall harbour a person whose he has reason to suspect to be intent on committing a delict! (*Comments.*)

But to pass from this study of comparative law, eloquent as it is in relation to the point I have just been dealing with, let us consider the question from the technical point of view. And here I would beg honourable members, especially those who sit in that part of the House (*pointing to the Left*) to liberate themselves from the political passions that now agitate them, and to consider the question calmly with the judicial mind that should be theirs, for jurists abound in this House, and above all in that Section of it.

Will honourable members tell me that, from the strictly technical point of view, enactments will bear criticism, which have given rise to the consequences I am about to lay before you, not fishing them forth, be it noted, from the vaster seas of hypothesis and the merely possible, but from the positive confines of legal sentences actually pronounced.

We have two enactments dealing with the repression of espionage in time of peace, viz., Article 107 and Article 110 in the Penal Code. Article 107 punishes any one who reveals a military secret. This clause is simply useless, it is mere shutting the door after the steed is stolen; for it can only very rarely happen that when the communication or revelation of the secret has taken place, such revelation can afterwards be discovered, and besides it is not the way to defend the State to confine oneself simply to the prevention of the revelation of secrets, and not of the revelation of all the countless details of an *ipso facto* confidential nature, which, taken one by one, cannot be termed «secret», but still are essentially secret in their entirety.

But let us see how the Article actually works.

In 1905, in the arsenal at Taranto, it was discovered that an employé had delivered to an agent of a Foreign Power the whole plan of the telegraph wires throughout the arsenal. He was in due course tried, and was acquitted.

An Hon. Member — In due course!

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — ... In due course acquitted, because, it was argued, the law said « secret » and as the telegraph wires are out in the open and everybody can see them who pleases, « secret » cannot be said of them.

Sig. RAIMONDO — It was the jury that acquitted him: the jury decide the fact.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — The jury decide the fact after hearing and weighing the defence, and I assure the honourable member that the line of defence taken on that occasion was precisely what I have stated. (*Comments.*)

But let us look at Article 110. The moment one studies it in connection with the actual conditions under which espionage in time of peace takes place, one sees at a glance that the article is much behind the times, altogether inadequate to cope with the improved technical means at disposal in our days; for the article refers to and deals with the sole case of a person who makes drawings of fortifications and so forth.

Well, there have been a number of prosecutions under this Article of persons who have taken photographs of fortifications; but these prosecutions always end in acquittals, because it is urged that penal law must be interpreted with all strictness, and so, as the law speaks only of drawings and as photography is not drawing, an action under the statute does not lie. Now I ask the House whether in these days any one can say a law is logical and consistent that punishes the man who makes the drawing and does not punish the man who makes the photograph an expert works

on to gain precisely the same ends as those aimed at by the drawing.

It is necessary then that this law should be revised, and revised essentially and permanently; for as it stands at present, it is useless for the purposes it is framed for.

But here we have an honourable member (Sig. Agnelli), and other honourable gentlemen, too, — (I must add to them now, it seems, Signor Bentini), — and they tell us ours is legislation in a hurry.

Sig. AGNELLI — In two days.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — In two days! That would certainly be exceedingly hasty.

### Legislation after long preparation. <sup>i</sup>

Well, I have brought down with me to-day, simply to show it to the House, this venerable official relic, because bundles of official papers, too, bear in the honoured dust that covers them those same tokens of maturity that a hoary head confers on a man.

Let me tell the honourable member, (Sig. Agnelli), that the matter is of very old standing. It began when that bill of 1896 was brought in, which has been already referred to; — (I will not mention its author's name, as I do not wish to hurt any one's feelings). This bill was laid before the Senate and passed there; but was shelved owing to the closing of the session. It was brought in once more in 1897, and once more the Senate passed it. This time it was not shelved, but was laid before this House. The House referred it to a Select Committee, presided over by Signor Lucchini. But the bill was stranded after all. Once more it was brought in, in 1906, by the Secretary of State for War, Signor Mainoni d'Intignano. But even then it failed to pass; and in 1909, when I was myself in office, I arranged with the Secretaries of State for Home Affairs and for War, to nominate a Commission in my own Department, presided over by the then Under-Se-

cretary, Signor Marco Pozzo; and this Committee went fully into the matter.

Now, when a question has such a history as this, — eighteen years of study, six appearances in Parliament, two approvals on the part of one of the two Houses, — what more do you want to recognize in it that venerableness which justifies its final examination before Parliament.

Sign. AGNELLI — The text was not the same.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — Not the same! Of course, it was not the same.

An Honourable Member — But the times are not the same either.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — Besides, I must confess, I am rather pessimistic as to revision of legislative formulas, I do not believe that the legislative formulas relating to juridical relations so eminently delicate as those that concern punitive matter, have the thaumaturgic virtue to satisfy *a priori* all the exigencies that from the point of view of equity may hypothetically be established. There are no such formulas: there never have been.

The true form of a law is the vitality given it by practice, by doctrine, by jurisprudence, by that daily application of it which serves to adapt it to the facts and to the forms of juridical relations. If only I could, I should like to make the following experiment. I should like unknown to everybody, quite unknown to everybody — (and so, of course my experiment can never be made) — to take an Article of the Civil Code, one of those Articles which have come down to us after two thousand years of preparation, one of those which, through the Code Napoleon, through Pothier, through precedents, through post-glossators and through glossators, through the Code of Justinian and the Edictum Perpetuum, find their origin at last in the Twelve Tables. I should like to bring that Article here and to lay it before this House, and I am perfectly certain that, if I did, you would pick so many holes in it, you

would find the formula so extremely infelicitous, that you would end by referring it to a Select Committee. (*Interruption from the Extreme Left*).

Ah, you see, we have already before our eyes, what it means, — this re-examination.

Well, I for my part, need I say, am entirely with the Committee, to whom I beg to tender my warmest thanks for the valuable contribution they have made to the bill laid before the House by the Government. Truth compels me to admit, however, to my profoundest regret, that almost universally the speakers who have compared the Committee's text with the Government's, are of opinion that the changes in the Government's have all been for the worse. Let us, then, put a period to this work of revision; for I shudder to think of what will happen, if we have any more of it. (*Laughter*).

Well, I trust I have said enough to prove completely the utility and advisability of the bill and to explain its *raison d'être*, and the House will, of course, understand why it is not my intention now to enter into the discussion of matters of detail. Were I to do so, I should weary the House: and all such matters will be better dealt with when we are considering the clauses one by one. We shall then have another opportunity to refer to them all. But I will say a few words now in passing on some points relating to these clauses, to which our attention has been called, and which are of such importance that they rise above the level of mere detail and rather take the form of an attack on the very principle of the bill.

An Honourable member (Sig. Meda) said: « You « punish private instigation: you punish the mere fact « of inducing others to betray a military secret. This « is contrary to the principles on which ordinary penal « law is based ». But another Honourable member (Sig. Stoppato) called his attention at once to Article 173 (first Section) in the Penal Code, referring to attempts to corrupt officials. My honourable friend



(Sig. Stoppato) has indeed, in drawing up Clause 7 of the bill, been careful, if I am not mistaken, to follow word for word the text of Article 173 in the Penal Code.

What then have we here that the most sensitive jurist can be shocked at, when we are able to assert that, normally, *de hoc jure utimur*?

### The Liberty of the Press.

Clause 4 again: — the press. And here I must first correct what the honourable member (Sig. Meda) must excuse my calling a mistake, a positive mistake, into which he has fallen, possibly because there has been some defect in our explanation of our intentions. These are his words: — « What, you link the prohibition of the publication of intelligence with a Government Order? Well, then, the simple and natural deduction is this: the journalist who publishes such intelligence, in spite of this prohibition, is a citizen who contravenes an order legally issued by Authority: he is then a contravener, not a criminal, in the sense of your Clause 4 ». — Now this I must be permitted to tell the honourable Member (Sig. Meda) is a mistake. The essence of the delict we penalise in Clause 4, is not transgression of an order issued by authority: the essence of the delict is to have impaired the safety of the State, by the publication of news prejudicial to the defence of the State. Our object, — (and here I come to the technical defence of the Clause), — our object in this Clause is quite other than the honourable member has held it to be. That the press, by the publication of certain news, may endanger this or that secret, or other fact it is important should not be generally known, this surely is a mere truism. It was well said yesterday by an honourable member (Sig. Marchesano) that the press, in the most disinterested conception of its mission, is, with its army of reporters, an organisation we are

justified in calling a spy-system, (*Cries of « Oh! Oh! »*)... (allow me to finish my sentence), — a spy-system permissible and permitted. (*Comments*). Reporting means the collection of news, for no unlawful end, — for the satisfaction of the people who read it. But this very publication of news may, at any given moment, bring injury to some vital interest of State defence. It is well known, so well known that it has become a common-place, that the disaster the French suffered in 1870 was in part at least brought about by an imprudent publication of military intelligence by a newspaper. What is to be done then? There are two methods possible, and I for my part hold that in what I propose I am choosing the method technically the most suitable and, if I may so put it, the most liberal too: for some other methods — (I refer especially to the course adopted in the scheme of my honourable friend, Signor Lucchini, which another honourable member, Signor Lucci, referred to yesterday as more liberal than ours), — make the existence of the delict and hence the penalty of the act, depend on the question whether the publication of the intelligence has or has not been of prejudice to the State.

It is the German conception of *Gefährlichkeit*, the perilousness of the intelligence.

A Member of the Extreme Left — In case of war.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — No, the clause in the Lucchini bill was of general reference. Well, then, we had to make our choice: — to act as we have done, or to leave the press permanently under the menace of a penalty for the publication of any military intelligence whatsoever, while the establishment of the delict and the punishment of the same would be dependent on that factor which is so difficult to establish, the prejudice to the State. How is this to be done? Where shall we find the expert, even among the highest officers of the General Staff, capable of foreseeing with certainty whether the publication of a given piece of intelligence will in a more or less

distant future be or not be prejudicial? A problem hard of solution, and whom shall we ask to solve it? The Judges? It is from no want of respect to the august body of men who administer justice in our midst, that I feel bound to express the opinion that in so doing we should render them liable to the gravest errors, both in condemning in cases where, as no real damage had been done, it would have been their duty to acquit, and in acquitting in cases where, as damage had been done, it would have been their duty to condemn.

Well, in place of a method presenting these dangers, our system is this: — normally, liberty: exceptionally a declaration by Government — (the very smallest of concessions to that German system of pre-war precaution, which assuredly has its *raison d'être*, as the needs of the various Governments make us every day realize), — a declaration by Government puts the daily press on its guard, indicating the moment when the publication of this or that piece of news is dangerous. In other words, as to that perilousness, which other systems leave to be measured case by case, with a measurement that may be arbitrary enough, I fix its determination on those who have the responsibility and therefore the right and the duty to decide what the needs of the State at any given moment are.

New what is there in this that is illiberal? No, Signor Bentini, I could never have imagined that you, living under the parliamentary system now in force in Italy, which lays no snares for any one, can inspire in no one the remotest fear of snares, — that you would have come down here and argued as though Parliament and Government were two powers pitted against one another, — just as if we were still under systems of rule centuries back outworn, — that you would even have ventured on the statement, which you will excuse me if I term somewhat hazardous, that the Government will avail itself of this measure

to gag the press. No, there will be no gag on it of our making.

You have spoken of discussion; and I reply that I am sorry not to be able to prevent this present discussion, when breaking all just bounds it takes the form of attacks on our military institutions, attacks against which, from the patriotic sentiment that animated the closing words of your speech, you should be the very first to protest.

The scope of the declaration now under debate is strictly limited. It deals with the prohibition of the publication of news. There is no word in it of prohibition of discussion.

Now, that this means the end of the liberty of the press, reaction, the gag and all the other fine things we have been hearing in this House, — well, really, I for one cannot believe it. (*Comments.*)

### Government's full powers.

Just one word on Clause 11. As to Clause 11, we are all, it appears, under the gravest of misunderstandings, and of course the chief fault here is mine; for if it is the drawing up of this clause that has led to the misunderstanding, this means that I must have drawn it up very badly, and this I regret, the more so as in all the rest of the text I am but a dilettante, for penal law, though the noblest of sciences, is beyond... (*Interruption.*)

It is the clause referring to that authority to make regulations, which has been called full powers. And this is the very clause that has to do with that branch of the law which it is my duty to teach. We have heard much in this House of full powers, of legislative delegation, of private property placed absolutely at the mercy of the executive. But when? But how? This clause as I read it... The honourable member (Sig. Turati) smiles. I have the right to claim from him that personal respect...

Sig. TURATI — I was not laughing at *you*.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — This clause, then, as I read it, gives the Government no authority that it has not already, viz, the authority to make regulations; and it is the usual wording... (*Interruption by Signor Arca*).

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE — No, the honourable member is mistaken. I am speaking now because it is not useless!... (*Interruption by Sig. Marchesano*).

It is the usual wording as to such regulations. Authority is given to the Government of the Crown to lay down by regulations the rules to be observed.

There is no delegation whatever. One of two things must be the case: either the matter in hand is one already subject to legal enactment, as for instance, mines, police, roads and other means of communication, etc., and then the power to regulate would be limited by the law, as is always the case: — or the matter in hand is one not hitherto under legal enactment, pigeon-keeping, for instance, which I am under the impression, is not under legal enactment, and then it would be the case for one of those regulations technically called independent, in other words, regulations the Government can issue in virtue of its authority as the head of the executive power.

An honourable member (Sig. Arca) says: — « Why have you given yourselves this power, then, if you have it already? » Well, there is the reason for which we have actually put it there, to legalize it: — and here is the legislative delegation laid down in the second paragraph of the Clause, for in jurisprudence the doctrine is that in regulation pure and simple there is no penal sanction; and so we asked for legislative delegation simply to sanction the ordinances that from time to time might be issued, within the limits of the law, conferring on us the requisite power to punish a possible delict. (*Interruption by Sig. Marchesano*.)

In any case, it is our wish to remove every doubt, every suspicion, for here it is the case to say:

. . . . convien che qui sia morto\*.

This I will say at once, to remove completely the anxiety of the House, as to the use the Government will make of these powers, that I have no objection whatsoever to agree that the ordinances to be issued by virtue of this clause be submitted to Parliament for its approval and for ratification in the form of laws. (*Lively comments.*)

What more would you have me say? What other and more solemn guarantee can be imagined?

Gentlemen of the Chamber of Deputies, —

Sig. ALTOBELLI — Clause 4? What do you say about that?

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, — Gentlemen of the Chamber, — I repeat that, reserving the replies and remarks I may feel called upon to make later, on points of detail which do not seem to me to affect the spirit of the bill or its principle, I believe I have accomplished the task I set before myself to-day. I am not here now, as I said when I began, to make any political declaration, if it be not this: — that the Government repels with unshaken serenity, I will not say the charge, but the very suspicion that, in proposing the measures now under discussion, it has been actuated by a spirit of reaction or of the repression of individual liberty. (*Comments.*) That it has been so actuated, has been loudly proclaimed outside this House and with less of emphasis within its walls: but the very suspicion must exist no more amongst us. We do not believe that there is such a thing as liberty to do evil. In the list of individual liberties this is not numbered: if on technical grounds you hold that

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(\*) Ogni viltà convien che qui sia morta.

(DANTE, *Inferno*, III, v. 15).

« Here thou must all distrust behind thee leave :

« Here be vile fear extinguished ».

(Cary's *Trans.*)

we have not in the case before us matter of delict, then modify the law on these technical grounds or limit its application; but do not suffer the right to play the spy to raise its head among the various rights of individual liberty. (*Loud cheers.*)

### Individual liberty *versus* the safety of the State.

There is no question whatever of individual liberty here. But if that question is to be raised and the allusions we have heard in this House are to be taken in that sense and to that effect, then let me tell the House that in this way you do no service to the cause of liberty. You do it no service when you would have men believe that a principle of liberty is not to be conciliated with the exercise of that force which accrues to the State for the defence of its territory, and not for that alone, let me tell the honourable member, (Sig. Bentini) but for the fulfilment of its destiny. (*Loud cheers.*)

If we could think differently, this bitter consequence would follow: — that a freer people, simply because it was more free, would necessarily be a people less strong, in other words, a people less fit to sustain the formidable struggle for existence in the world of nations (*Hear, hear!*), the sure and designated victim to the aggressions of other State organisations, which, untroubled by all such anxiety about what are to them but preconceptions, prejudices, empty sentimentalities, worship force alone.

I insist once more: I do not believe that these two great, nay, supreme ideals, are irreconcilable.

All the great democracies have been most strong, but most strong on the basis of a great concentration of powers in the hands of the Government in case of danger to the State, from the democratic Republic of Old Rome to the French Revolution, which triumphed over all Europe up in arms against it, by aid of its Sansculottes. I do not believe that these two are

irreconcilable. But if for one moment I could suppose it, and if I were forced to choose between the liberty and the safety of my Country, well, on that day, with anguish indeed but without hesitation, I would sacrifice her liberty. (*Loud and prolonged cheers. Many honourable members warmly congratulate the Minister.*)



## A JUST AND NECESSARY WAR

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*Palermo - Teatro Massimo, November 21 «st.», 1915*

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When we behold millions of lives cut down in the very flower of their youth and vigour, amid the wailings of mothers and the groans of the wounded, when we watch the destruction of hundreds of thousands of millions of material wealth, nay, the destruction of what is far more precious, noble sentiments and generous impulses, — while in Europe alone, (to say nothing of the reaction all this has on every part of the Old World and the New) 370 millions out of the 430 of its inhabitants stand waging war desperately on one another, and by a horrible reawakening of the blindest and most brutal instincts, Humanity seems to be falling back through the ages into the darkest barbarism, — what else can we think of, what else can we speak of, but this most terrible war? And how can we not think of it, how can we not speak of it, when amid this blackness of darkness of fire and smoke and blood, that like the veil in the Apocalypse seems to enwrap the whole Earth, Our Country stands wrestling for the first, the supremest ends of her very existence?

But though over all I say this one tormenting thought must needs brood, I am not here to-day to reaffirm the justice and the necessity of our war. That was demonstrated to you before to-day in a memorable speech by the calm and high-spirited

leader, who by a happy stroke of fate was at the head of our Country's Government at her supreme moment, — by Antonio Salandra, to whom to-day Palermo has done well to manifest its warmest gratitude; — and has been reconfirmed by the glowing eloquence of Salvatore Barzilai, whose presence in the Government is in itself a proud assertion of the rights of Italy. Nor do I address you to-day to stir your hearts or to revive them. In no part of Italy is there need of that, — least of all here, here before the matron majesty of my own Sicily, symbolized in her representatives all assembled here before me. With the pride of a son my mind calls up her story, — one long story of conscious heroism and faith unshakable, even in the face of the hardest sacrifices. Nor is it to announce new plans of the Government that I come before you, — new political programmes or new far distant aims. Assuredly the future has in store for us problems before which the brain may well reel; but the hour to cope with them is not yet.

My words to-day would fain aim rather at the satisfaction of the absorbing need of the soul to find itself in the hour of crisis with other friendly souls around it, — to give utterance among them to common plans and common hopes, and by such interchange of sentiments and ideas, to fashion the collective expression of what each of us within him marks and wills. Indeed, I would venture to assert that a speaker need seek no other argument than this inquiry into the « states of mind » which the people of Italy have passed through during the various phases of this terrible war; insomuch that we were first anguished and perplexed then restless and excited spectators of it, and finally noble and resolute actors in it: — such an inquiry would in fact be a reconstruction of the inner history of our war.

### The inner history of our war.

Now on this head, — I mean, the state of mind in which the people of Italy entered into the war, — our enemies have circulated the most laughable, the most absurd of figments, alleging that at that moment we believed we had before us the simplest of tasks, as speedy as secure, — as though in short, to us it was but a question of giving the *coup de grâce* to a foe already vanquished and prostrate, of laying down our stake in a game in which no risk at all was to be run. Such statements as these, of course, prove once again their incredible ignorance of all that bears on our collective psychology, and their utter incapacity to comprehend it; for it needed no very keen observer to see at a glance how entirely different, nay, how utterly opposed to this light-heartedness was the temper with which the Italian mind poised and weighed the gravity of the conflict opening up before it. I had best, I think, not say all I might on this head to-day: but every one here knows well how in certain circles, whose patriotic faith it would not be right to cast a shadow of doubt on, the pessimism with which the difficulties and the risks and the perils of the enterprise were weighed, rose to the height of developing phenomena one can only describe as the product of psychological paralysis. But putting aside all these cases, (as we have surely the right to), as mere exceptions, — it remains no less certain that the hesitation was general which, owing to the consciousness of the exceeding gravity of the conflict before us, manifested itself in organisations, in political parties and in individual politicians. This brief retrospect of mine is, I should say, purely historical, and aims merely at vindicating the generous nobility of our decision, — while at the same time it may serve to remind us that the grave anxieties inspired by the immensity of the risk, which

the vicissitudes of the war rendered so tangible and easily appreciable, were not unfelt by those too, on whom weighed more immediately, and therefore more terribly, the responsibility of the decision.

If the words of Hamlet are possibly somewhat too crude, — that « conscience does make cowards of us all ». — it is no less true that even when in the light of the intellect the bolder course seems the preferable, analysis, meditation, criticism have never yet rendered deed more resolute: — and what a deed was ours here to do!

Then it was that a miracle was wrought, and it was the will of the people that wrought it. Of course, I know well enough that all parties, even the most democratic, recognize the people only when it is the mouthpiece of sentiments in support of their own ends, while in all other cases we hear far other talk of « the blind masses » and of « presumptuous minorities » working their will by bullying and by violence. But who is there that remembers those days in May and that is not prepared to show himself lacking in the most elementary loyalty to historic fact, who can fail to recognise that never the feeling of a people burst forth with more fervid impulse, never the voice of a people spoke with greater authority, strong to shatter every obstacle, to vanquish and crush down every hesitation. The voice of the people spoke, and was as a trumpet-call that with her ancient ardours awoke the ancient songs of the Fatherland, so that it seemed that from their very tombs the dead sprang forth to feed with more living flame the hopes, the dreams, the lofty ideals till then stifled and low-lain. It was verily the voice of Italy: — and it was a voice that went out to meet the risk, that hastened on the strife, that invoked and defied the danger.

But this great event must needs seem the more wonderful, — involved, so to speak, in a veil of mystic causality, — in that the training to which for long decades the public spirit of Italy had been

subjected, was the least warlike that can possibly be imagined. Above all, the seductive theories of the solidarity of the human race and the mirage that, under the guiding hand of a supreme justice inherent in humanity, it were possible, without having recourse to force, to arbitrate between and to reconcile all competing energies, all the great world-wide rivalries, — these had won a completer and more decisive triumph than elsewhere in the Latin mind, ever more open to the fascination of the generous utopia.

Again, the economic prosperity that during the last few years had been Italy's good-fortune, bestowing on her if not riches in the absolute sense, still in a relative sense enrichment, had developed among us not the characteristics merely, but the defects no less, of mercantile peoples and industrial organisations. Everywhere men were heard talking with complacency, if not with pride, of the signs of economic wealth; whence grew and waxed ever keener among us competition and contest for the division of the profits, city against city, district against district, class against class. And more and more was weakened and extenuated the binding virtue of attachment to the State: nay, civic duty being reduced to a species of counterclaim that presupposes a claim it has to meet and is strictly commensurate with the same, the citizens of Italy, nay, the very servants of the State, were converted into so many creditors, insistent, pestilent, inexorable: every day there was, so to a speak, a bill of exchange that fell due and was presented with violence not unaccompanied with insult: individuals and corporations urged and pressed their claims without ceasing, demanding with threats and accepting with contempt. And to this economic frame of mind, prompt to aggravate all that was most faulty in individual or municipal or class egoism and to despise a generous sacrifice of self to the supreme collective idea of the Fatherland, came as adjunct a political frame of mind which preferred to get round an obstacle rather than

to affront it, to compound disputes rather than to settle them, to think its business was to keep things going on quietly in the present rather than to look forward to and prepare for the future: — such a way of looking at things that the greatest glory of a people came to be a clean balance-sheet, a budget without a deficit, while among the functions of the State none was held so in honour as its account-keeping and the perfection of its financial control, — a frame of mind, in short, which might well have been in harmony with our situation in those days, but which most assuredly was far more adapted to stimulate the virtue of prudence than that of heroism, far fitter to assure comfort than glory.

If, then, this people whom so many reasons rendered pacific, deliberately and voluntarily chose the path of sacrifice, at an hour when at what seemed its climax the mighty conflict was taking a turn certainly not favourable to those who were to become our allies, — the reason of the miracle is to be found in this, — that our people understood, nay rather, by some subtle intuition had revealed, that to absent itself from this war would mean, so to speak, to bid the hour sound of its own political suicide, and that abstention would bear with it a menace more obscure and a disaster more irremediable than any menace that lurked in war, any disaster war might bring. Yes, it is so. In the tragic hours of a people's life, when the inexorable alternative, «to be or not to be», presents itself before us, it is this mysterious, this wondrous saving virtue, which, bursting forth from the unfathomed depths of the collective soul, anticipates the carefully weighed verdict of conscience and guides us to the path of salvation. The instinct of collective preservation is enabled thus to vanquish the mightiest of instincts individual, the instinct of self-preservation: — the people of Italy willed that thousands of its sons should die, that Italy might live. And thus it was that, of the justice of the war and its necessity, the

popular instinct, working as is its wont by synthesis, had divined the profound, the irresistible reasons: — to the intellect, with its slower processes of analysis, is left their demonstration.

### **The profounder, essential reasons for our war.**

Well, the logical and historical necessity for our intervention is based on this. During the last forty years, there had grown up in Europe a moderating system, working for the peaceable communion of the nations in it, by means of a balance of power capable of fixing those limits, mutually respected, which are the essential foundations postulated for the enjoyment of every right, national or international. And the success of this system of equilibrium had been the greater, in keeping the peace and guaranteeing to every people a harmonious sphere of development, — in that, on certain questions, the aspirations and the needs of the individual powers in alliance with one another could not always or completely coincide; — so that there were cases when special interests justified special attitudes, and other cases where a relative freedom from the temptations of self-interest led naturally to a fairer appreciation and exercised a moderating influence. Thus, — to give an instance of the working of the first of these factors, — her allies had not prevented Italy from concluding useful and loyal agreements with England and with France, or from finding in Russia, as regards her Libyan enterprise, a consent far heartier and a sympathy far more fervid than her own allies had bestowed on her. And as to Germany herself, — to say nothing of the famous treaty of counter-guarantee with Russia, — not a few instances might be given of action decidedly favourable to Russia or to France and not always in accordance with the attitude of Italy or even of Austria. And as to the second factor above referred to, — a moderating influence of allies on

allies saved the situation when the peace of Europe was so gravely menaced owing to the Morocco question; and above all after the Balkan war, when hostilities between Russia and Austria seemed inevitable, the outburst of war was prevented by the disinterested, or at least less interested, action of the other powers. And who would venture to assert that the event which was the reason, or rather the pretext, for the present war, was charged with elements more essentially irreconcilable?

In taking part, then, in this system of European equilibrium, Italy was both upholding her own interests, which were so essentially pacific, and at the same time furthering a grand ideal of civilization: She was working energetically to establish a corresponding conception of right and of the intersocial life of the peoples of Europe, and vindicating her own dignity and her place as a great Power. And the value she set upon these lofty ideals was evidenced by the greatness of the sacrifice they had entailed upon her. She had not shrunk before the almost incredible paradox of an alliance with her natural enemy: to quote a dictum that has become celebrated and the striking truth of which has since been demonstrated by events, between Italy and Austria there lay the inevitable dilemma, — alliance or war. But alliance should have meant, if not oblivion of the old reasons of variance, at least loyal and sincere effort to temper that variance or at all events not to embitter it. And the history of the last few decades proves with what self-abnegation Italy fulfilled this duty and with what persistent bad faith Austria violated it. And here we find our enemies blundering into another gross error, when they conceive they have ground to remind us that other Italian lands form part of other states, and hold that, to be consistent, we ought either to make war on all the world or to content ourselves with including the whole world in one general denunciation.



They do not understand that the Italian mind, precisely because it is untainted by satanic imperialistic ambition, has not risen up in pain and scornful anger because men of our race were included in political unions other than our own, with full equality, however, of guarantees and with due respect to their ethnic dignity; but because Austria was resolved to crush down and even to stamp out the irrepressible Italian spirit of those lands and of those men, by a system now brutal, now insidious, but always methodical and tenacious; that she was never weary of torturing those our brethren with every persecution and every humiliation, to punish them for this, — that they were, and willed to be ever, Italians. And yet all this we endured, endured too to hear as though we heard them not the cries of distress of Trento and of Trieste, indomitable ever and ever faithful. It was true patriotism, we proclaimed, to blame every patriotic outburst, to repress every generous attempt at protest; we remained mute and inert, crushing down the natural impulses of pain and wrath that being men we could not but feel, beneath the most rigid and intolerable reserve of self-repression. And thus to an ideal of peace and civilisation, we made a holocaust of our loves and of our hates, of our tears and of our resentments, of our aspirations and of our rights; — in short, of all that we most passionately execrated and of all that we most passionately loved.

But the day came when swiftly, rudely, the whole edifice collapsed, and Italy found herself face to face with the tragic problem of deciding where the path of duty lay for her in a war which, from the very mode of its coming into being, involved all disputed questions, affected all interests, presupposed and imposed the complete revision of the causes and the conditions of the free coexistence of all civilised peoples. And here it is quite needless for me to dilate either on the text of the treaty of alliance or on its spirit, with the view to repeat once more the triumphant

demonstration you know so well, of our just cause; — or to lay before you once more the proofs of the dark and stealthy system of preparation, intellectual and material, for the most formidable and aggressive action; — and equally needless to tell over again the story of the anxious days that preceded the war and to trace out amid the fever of diplomatic colloquies and the chronology of military measures the dread responsibility for the irreversible initiative. For I hold that when the bloodstained epoch in which we live has reached its close, all such inquiries as these will have but a secondary and episodic importance in comparison with the significance in its entirety of a movement in which were seized as in a vortex the political factors and still more the moral factors of our modern European civilisation. Who is there that is not sunk in utter ignorance who does not know that in all great cataclysms, such as the one it is now our lot to witness, the will of individuals, however powerful, is never decisive. Man is but the instrument of a historic fatality, — which in the crisis works out its will. There are, then, only two ways of regarding war, — either as the clash of opposing races, for the triumph of the one superior and predestined, or as the clash of ideas, for the triumph of that with which is bound up the progress of civilisation: — in other words, the wars of Old Rome and the wars of the French Revolution. Under the first aspect, if, that is to say, in the present war it were true that there was found a people impressed with the belief that it was fulfilling a mission imposed upon it by some mystic power and to be effected by the inexorable might of its arms, so as to bring into being by its victory a new phase of the story of human progress, — such claims could not but appear to us a madness of pride and an intoxication of unmeasured ambition, — to us, the representatives of a civilisation that has fed with vital nourishment the whole social life of the most forward nations of the world, and that pulses still with

energy and immortal youth: — and we could not fail to feel ourselves wholly at one, morally and ethnically, with those other peoples who have risen up in defence of their true place in history and of the reasons that justify their existence in the family of the nations.

But if, on the other hand, the causes of the war are to be sought under its aspect of the triumph of a new and noble conception of civilisation and of progress, who can term such those we have heard proclaimed not only by single thinkers but by statesmen too, who spoke in the name of their country; viz, that the very principle of European equilibrium was faulty; that the field of activity of a people was to be measured by the criterion of its own needs, functioning by the aid of its own force; that the sole foundation, the sole guard of Right was the fine temper of the shining steel and the irresistible pressure of the sledge-hammer; that the sacrifice of the lesser nationalities was lawful, nay was mere duty, in so far as they were an obstacle to the exuberant unlimited expansion of a great people?

When again to do their utmost, probably in good faith, to give their war a defensive character, our enemies allege that their aim was to anticipate an attack that was being prepared against them, that they attacked so as not to be attacked, they do but give utterance to a sentiment which is practically the same as that tragic alternative, « we must crush others or they will crush us »; with which an earlier dreamer of worldwide supremacy, Napoleon, sought to justify his wars of conquest.

If, then, we found in our ideal a guiding principle, — a stronger motive still of policy urged us fatally, inevitably on in the same path. War in Europe once thrust upon us against our will, nay, contrary to our will, — how was it morally possible for us to combat at the side, or rather in the wake of our former allies, against our sentiments, against our aspirations, against our interests?

I do not believe that there is in all Italy a single

person capable of believing that Italian blood could have been shed simply for the greater glory and the greater power of Austria: and this our adversaries, more or less openly, more or less frankly, have recognized. Well, then, not to be able to fight with them, was in itself the most decisive of arguments for fighting against them, unless we were prepared to declare ourselves incompetent in all that is most essential to the life and rights of peoples, indifferent to the solution, whatever it might be, of a conflict in which, together with the interests of the whole world, were at stake also all the interests of Italy. And if such indifference was simply incomprehensible, what other reason could have been assigned to our abstention, but the fear of the hazard and the dread of the danger? Each of the two parties in the terrible struggle would have held that he who was not with them was against them; so that whichever were the conqueror, Italy, as she took no part in the strife, was pronounced vanquished in anticipation. And vanquished with ignominy; for to a people far worse than to be beaten in fight is it, to be held incapable of fighting at all.

### **The character and extension of our war.**

The above enquiry into the inner and more essential causes of our war, throws light at the same time on its nature and extension, and enables us to perceive the laws which it obeys. Indeed if any one tormented by an over-anxiety for verbal definition asks himself if ours is a national war or constitutes rather a phase in the great war between the nations, it is enough to remind him of what we said just now as to the factors determining our intervention, to perceive at once that if the impulse warward was, as it was bound to be, eminently national, it necessarily linked itself, welded itself so to speak, with the war that is international. There is no question here of abandoning the formula of «a just and holy egoism»: the truth is

rather that both the reasons for the war and the course of it determine in an enlightened egoism the clear and precise sense of a solidarity, the firmest, the most absolute, the most cordial possible, with the enemies of our enemies, with our present allies. No one with a shred of sense could ever believe that an isolated victory could be of any use to us, a victory, that is to say, apart from and independently of the victory of our allies: — and just as there can be no isolated victory, so there can be no isolated peace. The maxim « All for each and each for all » does not merely descend to us from the exalted spheres of national dignity and lofty ethical sentiment: it lives and has its being in the practical reality that manifests itself daily in the course of a war which, however formidably complex, is still essentially one. And it would be voluntary blindness not to perceive the ideal and material unity that links together the armies fighting on all the fronts, and the reciprocal action the successes and failures of each exert to the good or ill of all the other members of the one sole aggregate, in which are bound up the destinies of all the peoples who are fighting for the common cause against the common enemy.

But with no less clearness of thought and language must I add here, that this conception of solidarity, precisely because it compels us to consider as our own the common interest, justifies us in considering as common the interests that are our own. Nor are such considerations fettered by any preliminary qualification. In the generous nobility of her decision, in the conscious pride of her rank as a great power, Italy did not subordinate her intervention to aid given and compensation demanded, to which her action was to correspond, as though in due proportion. Rather has she made and will go on making every sacrifice for the common cause; but she will do it from her free and spontaneous appreciation of what best furthers the common cause, with no other limit

than this: — the tie of solidarity determined by fellowship in a common aim. No doubt, every collective force has need of coordination: — nay, from this point of view we must needs admit with the frankness of the strong, that in the action of the group of powers to which we belong, there have been both defects and lacunæ. But all such faulty coordination is sufficiently to be explained, independently of any egoistic hypotheses, by the consideration of the material and geographical fact of the military discontinuity of the armies of the powers of the *Entente*, and of the moral fact that none of them has been able to abdicate its own independent mentality and to become, as we have examples in the camp opposed to us, the docile and passive instrument of one sole will. But in spite of all this, so vital, so decisive and supreme is our interest to attenuate this inconvenience, that every effort to this end, to the very utmost of our power, must be made.

Now this situation of Italy in the general war has not been viewed aright by those who, in reference to the recent complications in the Balkan Peninsula, have told us that an Italian military intervention there was to be determined by the special and peculiar interests Italy has in all that concerns the organisation of that Peninsula. Assuredly these interests are real and grave enough: but as Italy does not and cannot regard them from a point of view independent of the common victory, whether she intervene or forbear to intervene, her action must needs depend on no other consideration save the appreciation of what line of action is best fitted to the attainment of the essential end. This sole consideration inspires us now and will continue to inspire us in the future: still I cannot but add here that whatever be its conclusive force, we are strongly influenced too by a reason of sentiment which after all is bound up with a reason of policy. Sentiment bids us proclaim all our admiration for the heroic Servian people and all our solidarity with them; policy bids us remember the incalculable importance

to Italy of the Balkan peoples, our immediate neighbours on the other side of that Italian Sea which bears the name of Adriatic.

### The Army.

In this war, accepted by us, not because it would be short, easy and safe, but because, well knowing it would be on the contrary terrible and long, we knew it was just and necessary, — that has happened which uplifts our thoughts and swells our hearts with emotion. Think of it: — all the Italians for all Italy! Never for long ages, from the fall of Old Rome, had the people of Italy descended thus into the field of battle, never had we felt so entirely ours, so all ours, this army which is the quintessence of all that is most generous, all that is most noble in the Fatherland. Every province throughout Italy has given that army her sons: every province in it glories to see in that army her own high worth, her own just pride: but for that army of ours glows one and the same consecrated flame of devotion, quivers one and the same trembling hope, from the mighty chain of the Alps to the Ionian Sea, from the peasants' scattered cots to the King's Palace, shrine of our hearts. The national unity had sometimes seemed but as a building raised on high by simply piling stones on stones: the blood fraternally shed from the Stelvio to the Isonzo has been the cement to weld the parts of the work definitively together. How are we to explain this mysterious influence, which danger has to link men far more than joy; so that sacrifices and suffering endured together make them far more truly one than the ordinary life of ease and comfort, and with bonds indissoluble? I cannot in the few words at my disposal express the full meaning of this obscure and wondrous bond which makes men who have faced the same mortal peril side by side feel themselves to be brothers born anew and at one birth of the same womb in

travail. And yet the bond I know not how to put into words is clear to the heart of each simple soldier: and by that bond is rendered material and tangible the consecrated solidarity of the race, the organic unity of the people, so that all competition has ceased that is not sacrifice. And in sacrifice vies with its fellow every class of society: and if it may seem that the middle class, judging by the very high proportion of officers who have fallen, has offered a larger contribution than the rest, this is because tardily indeed but nobly this class has realized that larger means and greater political influence find their justification only in increase of burdens, of the responsibility of duties to be done: and none of the champions of the struggle between classes will dream of protesting because our officers now vindicate their social privilege simply thus: — when sounds the signal for the assault, they go on before, the first to meet the death. And in sacrifice vie the partisans of the most opposite parties: — whether true or no, there is the lofty value of a symbol in the little story of the soldier who before the war had been a barber, and a fiery anti-clerical syndicalist to boot, and who yet was seen in the trenches in all loving kindness lending his aid to shave a little circlet on the head of a comrade, who had let his beard grow, but wished to preserve his tonsure.

And vie with one another too the sons of every province, the Piedmontese or Lombard artisan, with intelligence open to receive the most recent, the most complex ideas of modern civilisation, and the herdsman of the Abruzzi, in whose dreamy eyes seems yet to gleam the mystical vision of his mountains; the austere son of the Alps in the calm strength of his herculean limbs, and the peasant of the South, brown and lean, small & active, like a bronze from Pompeii. But in this solemn hour be it permitted us to call to mind with tenderness still more heartfelt and intimate, Italy's Sicilian soldiers; — those Sicilians who, side by side with the men of the Alps, defend



the gates of Italy. Fishermen of agile form, quickened and hardened by our sea and by our sun, who seemed once to be in their true place only on the lofty prow of their bark, exploring its blue waters for the fugitive prey: grave shepherds of Etna and of the Madonie who in the scantest of garb lay bare their breast to the perfumed gales of our eternal spring; peasants of the townships, coming forth from the low cottages whence the carnation smiles sweetly out upon the sunny lanes: workmen and artisans, who thanks to their marvellous readiness and insight, show themselves equal to the highest tasks in the new spheres of the great industries: men of toil and men of science, so various and yet so essentially one in the luminous and kindling tokens that, in their gaze, in their accent, in their very gait and gesture, show they are all sons alike of our Island of the Sun; yea, all that is fairest of ours, all that is strongest, is fighting now amid snowy peaks, in gorges lashed by the chill north-wind, with before them like vast cathedrals hewn in ice the mountains of eternal snow, which make pure every heart, sublime every faith. And yet their new task, so terribly strange to them, finds these marvellous soldiers of ours equally prompt and ductile: the cold their bodies suffer nought avails to chill the glow of their hearts: nay, they preserve to the full their vigorous health, proving to a deeply-stirred and wondering world, that good blood lies not, the blood of this great among the races.

When I would fain tell you what this army of ours has done and is doing, — and the fleet that forms its complement with its rude & patient vigil, the grander surely in proportion as it seems to shrink from proclaiming it as it is worthy to be proclaimed, — my words falter and I know not what it were best to say. Why should not the truth be told? We are paying the penalty now for the excess of rhetoric and the intoxication of phrases, which in other days we have made such inordinate use of, in dealing with

matters relatively less important; so that now, in the presence of the true epopœia, our vocabulary can find no terms that are adequate, and perhaps even the popular sentiment, with all its will to realize and to admire, is perplexed by an analogous defect of proportion.

With no thought of boasting in my mind, with no shred of exaggeration in my words, I do but express in the simplest way a simple truth, when I assert that our army has done all that man could be imagined capable of doing in the way of valour and self sacrifice, — nay, it has done more. And it has done so, first of all, after the example of Him who in this war may well be named the first, the greatest, the most heroic of its soldiers, — the example of our King, whose magnanimous soul, tempered by all the virtues of his warlike ancestors throughout a thousand years of story, but withal so prompt to absorb every modern sentiment, so refined and lofty ever and so noble, and everywhere present, rallies round it as the living working symbol of the Fatherland the pledges of all the sacrifices and the ardours of all the enthusiasms, all the sufferings from the long labours and all the impetus of the sudden charges, all the intoxication of the victors and all the murmured prayers of the dying. And it has done so, this army, owing to the serene and enterprising genius of its commander-in-chief, who knows so well how to fire the energies of his soldiers on the tortured field of innumerable battles; and owing to the harmonious and intelligent welding together of the various commands and the apt organisation of the commissariat and kindred departments, arranged with wisdom, supplied with profusion and working with the utmost skill and despatch. And the military virtues, so varying at various epochs, so different in different peoples, have revealed themselves all at once and mightily in our soldiers; the steadfast patience during the unnerving wait in the trenches under the hurricane of fire, and no less, the tiger spring, the

inresistible impetus in the onslaught; the prompt adaptation and skilful use of all the devices and technical inventions of the most modern art of war, and the overwhelming superiority in the hand to hand fighting that was the war-method of prehistoric man; the discipline wrought of fidelity and of love, the sobriety and physical endurance that witness to the healthiness of the race, the pride untainted by aught of overbearing, the courage free from all brutality. And their task demanded no less from them. For to them, as to no other of the armies in the field, in this terrible war, were opposed all possible obstacles and perils in union with one another: — from epic encounters above the verge of the eternal snows to the passage under the enemy's fire of a river that was one vast whirlpool and deathtrap; — above all, that network of natural and artificial defences that the human mind can barely conceive, which had made of the terrible Carso a bulwark one may well term, — I will not say, impregnable, — but unattackable. And yet our army attacks it, takes it by storm: and gaining ground inch by inch at the price of its blood, has already won back a hundred and twenty two communes to the Fatherland, and has forced the foe to abandon the vulgarest of insults for the most respectful admiration.

Yes, this army of ours is indeed the image of young Italy: and never as in this hour have we felt so stung with remorse fearing, that we had haply sometimes doubted of the younger generation, allowing ourselves well-nigh to dread that we should find in it that decadence in progression which had already made itself manifest in our own. But now! Through all the mortal anxiety that, crushed down though it be, every day, every instant tortures our hearts for the lives of our sons so far away from us, we are conscious of that feeling which is the humiliation of a man and the pride of a father, — the feeling that our sons are of greater worth than we.

## The People.

This is our army over the border: but no less necessary for the victory is the cooperation of that other army, the army that lives this side the frontier, — the whole people. A subtle web woven of a thousand indissoluble threads links the combatants at the front with all those agencies to rearward of them, whence they draw sustenance for their material life and their spiritual, whence they receive not only the bread that feeds them and the raiment that clothes them, but also that sense of solidarity made up of devotion and tenderness, with which love comforts the suffering, gratitude rewards the sacrifice. It may be that this spiritual sustenance and protection are at least not of minor worth to us than the material: for who can measure the energy and the faith inspired into the masses of the combatants by the idealising impulse of the whole nation, which with one heart and one hope stands waiting their final victory? He who, as has often been my lot, has been privileged to visit the front, cannot fail to have brought back with him the clear vision of two Italys that now are, the Italy that is doing heroic deeds in tragic environment, is suffering there, is combating, is conquering and is dying, and the other Italy that, in virtue of the self-sacrifice of the first, is living peacefully on by its well-shielded hearth and in perfect confidence going about its ordinary business. And it is well that it should be so: but still it is our plainest and most sacred duty that the fellowship between these two Italys should be ever intimate, living, enduring; that at our every moment and in our every act should be reaffirmed our solidarity of sorrow and of pain with our brethren up there upon the border: that towards them and for them, should be directed our every thought, our every prayer, our every stirring of pride, our

every spasm of anxiety. It is imperative that each of us accept with resignation, nay with joy, his part in the sufferings, or, it may be, merely in the discomforts, if thereby that solidarity is affirmed and consecrated, — imperative that every one give something or do something, that at the very least he discharge his daily duties with an austerer self-discipline, that he raise himself so as to draw nearer to the sublime example of devotion and self-sacrifice we are given to have presented to us. Woe to the absent, to the defaulting, to the useless; woe to the avaricious of money and the hard of heart: to those who shut themselves up within the narrow circle of their egotism, to those who can go on enjoying their own frivolous existence, forgetful of those others who are giving their noble lives for the common defence! All these belong most assuredly, if not to the same group, still to the same class as the traitors to their Fatherland, to the class of those who speculate on the general calamity, from the greedy monopolist to the rapacious purveyor.

But this aspiration after an ever more intimate and complete solidarity between the Italy that combats and the Italy that stands behind the combatants, is, under another aspect, a ground for comfort, in that it shows us how that peril we were warned of has passed away, which the more its fear grew upon us, seemed ever the more threatening and pernicious; — the lack of calm and serenity. The Italians had the reputation. — and not, it seemed, without reason — of being people prone to emotion and more capable of being hurried by excitement into obedience to some sudden impulse, than tempered to a wearing resistance: swift to fire but swift too to subside into despondency. The world refused to grant us that self-control, that spirit of order, that sentiment of discipline, all those qualities in short which, not less than army-corps and ammunition, are needed to conquer in a strife like the present, whose most despairing feature is precisely the slowness of its decision.

Well, these forebodings, which were not felt only by the pessimists by profession, have been splendidly confuted by facts. And here I would not fall into the wonted Italian failing of hyperbole and err in excess of pride. I know that shadows are not wanting to the picture. I admit the deficiencies that may be found in our civil organisation, and the defects and the blunders that may be pointed out in the discharge of the formidable task that weighs upon the Government. But is there any other people among all those waging this gigantic war, of whom the same thing may not be said, though possibly not quite in the same measure? For the question is not whether in grappling with a crisis which has no precedent in the history of humanity, all has proceeded in ideal and perfect fashion; but whether a people has shown itself to possess the civic virtues necessary for resistance. And the Italian people has resisted, and is valorously resisting. It, like the rest of the allies, in the civic field of strife, has maintained and defends its position with calm, with tenacity, with sang-froid: it has avoided all excess of extremes: it has been neither boastful nor timid, neither arrogant nor servile. And I may instance in proof of this the good order throughout our land, which has been maintained at a higher level than in ordinary times, though amid economic trials and losses of all kinds, bravely borne: and all who know how almost impossible it is to rule the masses by coercion, will attribute this wonderful fact far less to the preventive efficacy of police measures, which as a matter of fact have been of the mildest, than to the lofty sense of discipline which the people has imposed on itself and has shown itself capable of imposing on all who ventured on the treason of violating the national union.

And most assuredly, this concord of ours has been a triumphant surprise no less to anxious friends than to enemies deluded; and of the tenacious national cohesion we have thus exhibited, we have good reason

to be proud. It would be the most miserable pedantry to decompose this concord into its prime elements and make a hypercritical analysis of it, — nay, I venture to say that, the greater may have been the initial differences between the various political creeds and individual aspirations, the more meritorious must appear the sacrifice of them to the needs of the Fatherland. No doubt, it would be going too far to claim that, by virtue of such discipline, all acquire the same temper, all are fired with the same glow of enthusiasm and of faith. Here we are on the ground of personal temperament, not of national union: — in any case, political principles have nothing whatever to do with the difference.

And equally so, I think we must regard as merely a matter of temperament that tendency which we observe in some individuals among us, quite apart from any political motive and still more from any deliberately antipatriotic sentiments. The fact is, one may have a pessimistic temperament just as one may have a bilious temperament, or a lymphatic, or a sanguine; and the pessimistic makes a man discontented, or even positively haunted by dread of a catastrophe; so that the force at hand never seems to him adequate to the effort to be made, the result attained never adequate to the hopes entertained. The habit of criticism and analysis characteristic of natures such as these, sharpens and refines the faculty of spying out beforehand the weak side in every plan; and this brings with it, though our critic would be the very last to confess it, an expectation of events which will justify these gloomy prognostications; for the *amour propre* of the pessimist is bound up with the fulfilment of his gloomy forebodings, and as he has predicted that things will go badly with us, he has a natural satisfaction when they really do go badly. Well, before the war, the ranks of such people as these were recruited by all who considered speedy and inevitable the invasion of our country with all

its horrors; and now when our soldiers are over the frontier, it is these same friends of ours who tell us we are not getting on fast enough: and the silent preparation of an offensive is in their interpretation of it a clear proof of an insuperable check to our arms: and when it can no longer be doubted that a position has been won, they ask anxiously whether it can be held; and when it is certain that it can be held, they ask what in the wide world is the good of holding it.

They seem to be bad citizens and yet they are not so; or at all events they do not know they are. Fortunately, there are not many of them: and the will of a whole people, strong and young and sound at the core, is able to prevent the mischievous influence from spreading.

The eye that gazes out upon the broad field where the ears of corn wave golden, sees not the tares, sees not even the slenderer stems and the stunted. It sees but the golden harvest, spread out beneath the great sun: and it knows the reaper will gather into his garner nought but good grain, since good was the seed and true the toil that nurtured it.

### **.The War Legislation: The Law of Guarantee.**

The Government, for its part, has regarded the extraordinary Powers conferred on it, not as a coveted increase of its authority, but as an increase of responsibility, painful but inevitable. For, indeed, it could not but feel that the responsibility of abstaining was not less grave than the responsibility of intervening; — nay perhaps greater still, for the erroneous impression has not yet been wholly overcome that economic phenomena (the price of comestibles, for instance), may easily be controlled by a Royal Edict or by a law of the State. Easy and seductive seems the solution, to legislate on such matters: but just as some drugs bring present relief to the detriment of the vital forces of



the organism, so to play the game of particular interests and put formal laws in the place of economic, means to give temporary relief which too often ends in bitter delusion and ruin worse than it would have mended. Still, while well aware of the painful and sometimes unpopular duty, to measure out with great caution the intervention of the State, and where doubt exists, to refrain from it, — the Government has not allowed itself to be fettered by any preconceived theory and has not shrunk from facing the gravest responsibility of decisive action whenever the supreme interest of the State has shown itself so clearly and categorically as to be entitled to prevail over all other considerations. And though such cases may have been less numerous than they would have been, had we yielded to the demands of the interests affected for the worse by the war, they have yet been so frequent as to have created what may justly be termed a *corpus juris* of war legislation: a huge mass of enactments, that must needs have been now against precedent and now entirely without precedent, and that have introduced innovations, often the most profound innovations, into all our five codes, the civil, the commercial, the penal and the two judiciary, And if the experience acquired from the working of this formidable body of legislation is of more value than any judgment formed *a priori*, still we trust that we shall not be accused of arrogance when we claim that the errors committed do not overpass that minimum which must be granted to human fallibility and is inevitable in all such enactments even when they have been preceded by a long and weighty preparation.

A difficulty of another order, but if possible yet more delicate, was created by the position of the Sovereign Pontiff, whose special sovereignty had been recognized by a fundamental law of the State, observed with all possible loyalty for nearly half a century. In it the event of war had not been explicitly dealt with: nor had the omission arisen from oversight,

but rather, as the proceedings in the parliaments of those days clearly prove, from the hesitation and perplexity that were generated by the clear perception of the grave complications that event would determine, in a question already in itself so exceedingly difficult. Well, this difficulty, which perplexed men so great as they were, we have grappled with and overcome, simply by sheltering ourselves under a scrupulous observance of the law, not only maintaining intact all the guarantees that law conferred, but filling up any gap that the experience of its working laid bare, in a spirit of large interpretation of its fundamental principle, viz., the recognition and the guarantee of that special form of spiritual sovereignty.

And thus, while in other conflicts of interests and of peoples, not more gigantic than this, the sacred quality of the Head of the Church had not prevented Her temporal Sovereign from suffering persecution and violence, prison and exile, from Gregory VII to Boniface VIII and so on to Pius VII, — in the present awful world-tempest, which has not spared the most unchallenged of principles, the mightiest of empires, and has shown so clearly of what little worth are the most solemn international engagements, the Supreme Pontiff goes on governing the Church and exercising his lofty office with a fullness of rights, with a liberty, a security, a prestige, such as comport with the truly sovereign authority that in the spiritual sphere is his due.

Men of Italy! —

By the heroic worth of her armies, refulgent on the battle fields, and by the austere fortitude with which her people have borne the sacrifices, the devastations, the sorrows of this terrible war, Italy has already won a victory the moral value of which it is hard to overestimate. Even in the short span of our individual life, the good easily won is less desirable to us, while that secured by more painful effort is more precious: the goal that must

be reached by more suffering, bears therefore more of joy to him who attains to it. And so it is with the life of a people.

Freedom, the greatest of all goods, is not truly prized nor guarded with the religious care its high worth claims, when it is not the fruit of a great collective sacrifice, in which every individual, every generation has had part. No people can be linked together by a firm national bond, if it has not tempered that bond by long and hard contests, if it has not held it firm at the cost of a defence ever vigilant and sometimes desperate. The State, that is most completely one and most inspired by the spirit of ardent patriotism, France vindicated her independence in a war of a hundred years: and Germany, — to say nothing of the wars against Napoleon, — sprang forth from out the twofold strife of 1866 and 1870, blood-stained but victorious, a mighty state organisation. And if our own Sicily feels so intensely the force for collective sacrifice and preserves so tenaciously the impress of the thoughts and feelings that make and keep her one, it is because her story has been signalised and profoundly influenced by deeds to the doing of which contributed by their valour, by their substance, by their blood, her whole people; insomuch that with heroic courage and with invincible national spirit she bore up alone for twenty long years against half Europe, and fought three battles on land and four on sea, and three invasions endured and three repelled, and often, later on, in the course of the centuries, uplifted as one arm the arms of all her sons in defence of her historic individuality and of the ideal she enshrined.

Now to Italy, the heroic period once past of constitution into a political unit, had till now been lacking the conflict that should enable her to vindicate her organic unity as a people. Nay it had been mainly the fluctuations time brings with it and international complications, good fortune in the environment and

shrewdness in ministers, that had given our country some of the provinces that are most her pride, at a sacrifice not to be compared for a moment with the price we have to pay now for a single Alpine peak or a single nameless shred of tableland. Rome herself, the aspiration, the passion, the dream of how many thousand years, the radiant bloodstained goal of how many peoples who surged & shocked beneath her ageless walls, Rome herself was ours at the price of far less pain than now is ours to win a few poor square yards on the desolate waste of the Carso. And one might well fear that thus would be generated within us an indolent and unwarlike trust in a provident star, of such might that it was enough for us to be Italians and the destinies would change their course to give us in pure benevolence what others had won by stern vigil and the bitterest toil and the most desperate effort.

But now when the Italian people has heard for the first time the call to it as a one and united nation, as a nation one und indivisible, not in a political formula or in a well-weighed diplomatic correspondence, but on the field of battle under the fire and against the steel of the enemy, it has with faith and joy gone to meet its baptism of blood and has looked boldly in the face all the horrors of war. And so it has proclaimed to the world that the Italy of our days is no mere dreamer wrapped in delight of the beauties of nature and of art, but knows no less the stern and saving virtue of sacrifice and of suffering: that she is not alone the mother of thinkers and of poets, but of a whole people too, fired by thought and tempered for action: that our faith has muscles, nerves and blood; so that we have not only hearts to dream of the greatness of our Fatherland, but more than this and more than all, strong hands to seize her winged victories.

And of this our victory already won, the recognition comes to us from the source least of all to be suspected,

from our enemies themselves. We had sought them and fought them face to face in the passes and on the river-banks of our miserable frontier, in the loyal strife of war, where even in the midst of mutual slaughter the soldier respects the soldier who stands fronting him. But the more surely our foe sees all chance of honourable victory escaping him, the more his fury grows, the more his perfidy refines, the more his unbridled hate rages pitilessly against the unarmed and helpless, hoping thus to shake our courage and wear us down by collective intimidation. And we have seen him abase himself thus, step by step, to the treacherous use of our flag, to the feigned surrender that cloaks attack, to the inhuman savagery against the ambulance and the hospital, to the meaningless, wanton destruction of master-pieces of art and beauty, to the bombardment of cities open and undefended. But none the less for all this we fought on and we conquered: and lo! the wholesale massacres of Verona and of Brescia, and now the criminal sinking of the *Ancona* and the *Firenze*. And thus Italy may be said to have suffered the most inexcusable of all the crimes by which this war has been sullied; for if in the case of other similar atrocities it has been possible to plead before a horror-stricken world a reason, however fallacious or inadequate, the transport, say, of material useful in war or a previous warning as to a certain well-defined danger zone, what shadow of pretext could even the most shameless of men ever devise to justify the destruction of those harmless vessels, that were bearing out of Italy those poor unarmed souls, to tread, far off from the war, their daily round of labour and of sorrow?

Well, to this last unheard-of infamy, while the Government fulfils its duty in providing for our defence in the future, we answer, here in this our Palermo, that in all the two thousand years of her story has never known what fear is, reaffirming our inflexible determination that the assassin shall not win the

reward of his crime. He meant to intimidate us, and instead of that to him is due that we shall persist in the war with feelings that never up to then had found entrance into our hearts. It has been and is still our will to fight in this war without hate and not for vengeance, as one who knows he does but combat for his right: but as long as our ears are despairingly tortured by the death-shrieks in vain appeal to Heaven of our women as they drowned, as long as we have ever before our eyes the faces of mothers maddened by that moment of terror and the little white hands of our babes uplifted towards God, then a horrible mass of human creatures and of wreckage that disappears beneath the impassible bosom of the sea, oh, so long we shall fight with hate and for vengeance, we shall fight to the last farthing of our substance, to the last drop of our blood, not alone to vanquish an enemy but to tame to impotence a wild beast. And we shall conquer. And our hate will be the seed of love among the peoples that have their faces set towards a higher civilisation; and our vengeance will endure in the sight of history, as an act and as a warning of solemn justice.

## THE PROTECTION AND AID OF THE FATHERLESS OWING TO THE WAR

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*Chamber of Deputies, Dec. 13 th, 1916.*

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Sig. V. E. ORLANDO, Home Secretary — The brevity of this debate is on the one hand a proof that the House is so sensible of the high importance of this question as to be anxious to apply to it the saying: « Better act promptly than talk long, be it ever so well. » But from the very trend of the debate, it is no less a proof that there are not, and indeed could not be, any substantial differences of opinion as to the necessity of this bill, or as to the urgent necessity that it should speedily receive the approval of this House

And the passing of this bill is no less imperative on the ground of the essential principles it is based upon; for even the speech which criticised it most during the course of this debate, I mean the speech we heard from the honourable member who has just sat down (*Signor Vigna*), after all bore on some points of importance, I admit, but not the real essence of the bill.

This brevity of the debate the House will, of course, understand, has had this consequence, that it has left me without either the time or the means for even that minimum of preparation necessary to deal worthily with a subject of such grave importance, in other words, to arrange and group the arguments that have

been laid before us. I can only ask the indulgence of the House for the succinct form of my reply. And indeed, to expedite matters, it really may not be amiss to make my remarks brief and even somewhat incomplete, because some points I may leave to be dealt with by the honourable member who presented the report of the Committee, whose work has received such high and merited praise, in which I most cordially join, so worthy has it been of the matter in hand; while of other special points we shall be able to speak later on, when we are discussing the various clauses in detail.

Let me, then, say to my right honourable friend, Signor Rava, with regard to the pensions, that this question, as indeed he himself observed, undoubtedly bears upon the matter now before the House, indeed has decided relations with it, but still remains distinct from it.

My right honourable friend has himself pointed out that the fervid and beneficent zeal with which he has devoted himself to this question has been fertile of good, that no few of the seeds he has sown have already borne their fruit; and I gladly echo his hope that the further aims he told us he cherished may find a welcome that will ensure their accomplishment.

An honourable member (*Signor Veroni*), has reminded us of the different conditions that obtain in the various parts of Italy, as regards aid to the distressed, — the state and the working of Pious Foundations in our Country. The question is too grave and weighty for me to treat it now in passing; so far, I mean, of course, as it is linked with the needs for which the bill now before us provides. I may, however, inform the honourable member, that among the merits of this bill, which has been thought out after so much assiduous and fruitful collaboration between the Government and the Committee, is distinctly to be reckoned its eclecticism.



It is a bill which aims at utilizing every existing force, without excluding any; and so, where private energy and initiative — (as it is but just to admit is the case in many parts of Upper Italy), — suffice for all the needs of public aid, the bill does not dry up these sources, but gives them the means of a more efficient organisation; and no less so, in a considerable part, if not in the whole, of Southern Italy, where public aid is held in great honour and by no means rarely worthily laboured for. But where deficiencies are to be detected, as they undoubtedly are, in that case the needed supplement is found in an intervention that can only be the State's, because except the State's I can see no other possible, and where all these forces I have referred to lend no aid and so to rely on them would leave us with absolutely nothing, — (though I am unwilling to go to such lengths in a pessimism I would fain term excessive), — there the supplementing, integrating action of the State steps in to fill the gap.

There can be no doubt, allow me to tell the honourable member (*Signor Veroni*), if the statistics are carefully studied, that the difference in the importance of the Dotal Institutes does not depend — (and it needs no great exercise of logic to realise that this must be the case) — does not depend on whether we are in North Italy or South, but on whether the tradition is more or less widely diffused in this or the other district of that particular form of beneficence which consists in the granting of marriage portions. As a matter of fact, there are parts of Upper Italy with large revenues to this end, and other with smaller ones; and the same may be said of the South: but of course wherever the contribution from these temporal goods of Pious Foundations is lacking, the want is undoubtedly supplied by the State.

And I may further assure the honourable member that the various prefectures will be placed in a position to deal with this most vital task entrusted them by the law. And I can assure my honourable friend

Signor Cottafavi, that there will be no niggardliness in the use of means, and that the lesson will not be lost on us, which with such abundant savour of classic lore he has drawn from the story of the Cæsars.

And now I proceed to deal with the questions of capital importance. They were laid before us, or rather, laid down, with that mastery we all recognise is his, whether he speaks from his place in Parliament or from his University chair, by my right honourable friend, Signor Rava, who with swift synthesis and admirable lucidity placed the House in a position to appreciate both the essential features of this question and the various ways possible of dealing with it to best advantage. And after him came another honourable member, Signor Vigna, who proceeded to deal from the point of view of the scientific critic of keenest temper with this weighty question which so calls forth all our sympathies; and most assuredly it is both opportune and useful to free ourselves from the fetters of those considerations of sentiment which are inseparable from this matter, so that with minds calm and lucid we may be able to grapple with the exceedingly difficult problems it involves.

The modes of dealing with the question are manifold, and the honourable member (*Signor Vigna*) has succeeded in distinguishing them by the most systematic classification. The creation of a vast central organisation capable of taking upon it the care of all these fatherless children of ours, was at the basis of the earlier plan of the Ministry. The Committee has rejected it, seemingly not to the regret of the House, from the moment that it heard from the honourable member (*Signor Vigna*), the severest critic of us all, that in his opinion we should go even farther still in subdivision in any plan adopted.

Well, it is my opinion too, that we have done well to put aside the idea of the creation of this mastodontic organisation, not so much on quantitative grounds, as the honourable member seemed to hold,

— not merely and not so much because unfortunately these fatherless whom it is ours to care for will amount to several tens of thousands, — as on qualitative grounds involving the very essence of the work we are now planning to put into operation.

The comparison will occur to every one, of the plan I adopted for the orphans of the earthquake in Calabria and Sicily. But the very making of this comparison should lead directly to the rejection of its validity. For in the case of that earthquake, the orphan in most cases stood alone in his desolation. In that terrible convulsion of the earth, the orphan was in many cases the unknown. There are still orphans from those days who have no idea what their name once was; and so the loss of father, mother, grandfather, uncle, compelled the task of guardianship to take the form of the orphan asylum, and the other forms of aid were quite exceptional.

Our decision here is not, then, I repeat, to be based merely or so much on quantitative grounds, — (the duty we are called on to perform is so lofty that no question of finance, of means, will ever have power to hamper us), — as on grounds of far other gravity and importance.

In the present case, contrary to what happened in the earthquake in Calabria and Sicily, the fatherless child has for the most part a family to find shelter and care in. Our dear ones were for the most part young when they died; so there is still a mother, there is still a grandfather, for the child that has lost its father in the war. Now, allow me to say, it would be a very strange way of paying our debt to the dead, to tear these children from their mother, from their grandfather (« *Hear, hear!* »). This is the vital point in the matter, and it serves to explain and to justify all that is elastic (to quote the term employed by one of the speakers), all that is varied, multiple, or (in philosophic terminology) eclectic, in the bill now before the House. I repeat, then, all this variety

of means which the bill takes into account, without ever for a moment erecting any of them into controlling, absolute standards exclusive of any of the others, serves, in my opinion, admirably to enable us to vary our methods according to the varied requirements of the cases with which we shall be called upon to deal.

And so our care for them will range from the orphan asylum, already in existence in those admirable and beneficent voluntary agencies we actually see at work in our midst, — (for here it is no case of reliance on an uncertain future: a work fruitful of good in already being done: all the provinces of Italy are doing their part in it), — from the orphan asylum, I repeat, when this is necessary, through the various intermediate stages, till we come at last to the aid rendered in the sense merely of following up the case, taking note of it, having periodical information respecting it, in all those instances in which such measures as these are all that is necessary.

And it is my wish and hope that these latter cases may ordinarily constitute the majority, when that system of pensions coming so opportunely in to aid us here has been firmly established, to which my right honourable friend, Signor Rava, referred, when he spoke of the modifications recently introduced therein, with a view specially to the means to be adopted for the guardianship of the fatherless.

Well, having, I hope, made this clear to the House, I pass on to consider briefly the criticisms of the honourable member (*Signor Vigna*), leaving two of them, however, to be dealt with by the Committee, not only because here we have before us suggestions emanating from the Committee itself, but also because both the questions I refer to are so informed with the spirit of the Committee's illustrious President, that no one better than he or more brilliantly could attempt their settlement.

Sig. LUIGI LUZZATTI, President of the Committee —

To save time, the illustrious President . . . . has the fullest confidence in the writer of the Committee's report (*Laughter*).

The Home Secretary: The honourable member (*Signor Vigna*) asks, us: « Why are the Communes excluded from all share in this work? » Well, I have already said that between the two extremes which marked the limits of possible action, between, that is to say, the creation of a mastodontic central organisation and such a pulverisation, so to speak, such a scattering into small fragments, of the special agencies dedicated to this work, that the control of them and the establishment of unity in their management would have presented formidable difficulties, the Committee has held fast to the middle way.

In other words, it has entrusted the care of the fatherless to a provincial organisation, but not so as to exclude a further central action on the part of the Home Office, which exercises a superintendence over the Provincial Administrations; indeed it does not even exclude the possibility, nay I would say the necessity — (and here I am in substance in agreement with the honourable member, while I disagree with him in his contention that the bill renders this impossible) — the necessity, I repeat, of action on the part of the Communes.

Clause 9 of the bill gives the Provincial Committees very extended powers of fellow-working with the Communes and the Charity Corporation by promoting their action in cooperation with the special committees that may be nominated.

Here too, we have that variety of means which, in my opinion, is the best way to enable the Communes to exert this action of theirs to the full extent of their power. The Charity Corporation is not excluded: but would it have been well to establish it as the only possible organ of aid from the Communes? No, let me tell the honourable member, and for the very reason he has urged, — to show the utility of availing

ourselves of the Charity Corporation; for the Charity Corporation is a body that administers property, so that, as he said, if in this or that Commune it is not in operation, the reason is that the Commune in question has no property.

Now this very fact, that the Charity Corporation is essentially a body constituted to administer property, is a reason for excluding it; for this is no question of the administration of endowments and estates, but of effective vigilance and spiritual assistance.

And here he must forgive me if I say before I pass on, that he really wronged those very working-classes in whose name the Members who sit in his part of the House deem they have the right of speak with particular authority, when he complained of the 42nd Clause, according to which those who discharge this duty are to be unpaid for the doing it. Well, one may say what one likes about the unpaid discharge of public duties; but let me tell the honourable member, to believe that the working-classes (for it is of them I am now speaking) must have directors' attendance fees of five or ten francs per meeting to generate in them the impulse to shelter and care for the little child of the soldier who has died in the war (*Hear, hear!*), is to wrong the working-classes. Why, from this point of view, the kindness of heart I mean, that urges them to extend their care to that child, the working-woman is of greater worth than her middle-class sister; and the proof of this is those women of the back-alleys, who, when some of their number have to be absent from their homes, take in and shelter the children of those absent ones (*« Hear, hear! » and cheers*).

And this same reason should remind the honourable member, that his references to the discussions, only too well-known amongst us, as to the admission of ecclesiastics into the Charity Corporations, were really quite out of place here. The honourable member spoke of a step backward; while some interruptions his remark evoked seemed to suggest that there were those who

held it was more correct to say in this connection, a step forward. The truth is that there is no question here of a step forward, or of a step backward. The question here is quite different, the care, above all the spiritual care, of the child (*Hear, hear!*). And as to this, if we are truly and worthily to perform our task, we must look at the matter from the point of view of the presumable wishes as to intervention to this end, of him who, ere he died a hero's death, was the child's father (*Hear, hear!*)

Signor Vigna, there are, as there have always been, atheists in the world: but atheism (it is history that teaches us) is but an individual possession. There are among individuals great, very great atheists like Voltaire, and there are atheists of the most untempered mediocrity, like so many others than he; but of atheistic peoples history knows nothing: the peoples are not atheistic: be it in this or in that, in *something* the masses... believe.

The education of the child, according to me, should be entrusted to the mother (*Hear, hear!*). When she is incapable or unworthy to discharge this trust, then let the fatherless child go to the Homes of the Charitable Institutions. Can the honourable member imagine a child under the care of the Charity Corporation and aided by that body in his spiritual needs? These mothers, when they want advice, go to the priest. The priest is no affair of mine: the arrangement we propose means simply the placing ourselves at the true point of view, and that point of view is the needs of humanity. (*Loud cries of «Hear, hear!» and interruption by Signor Maffi.*)

The House will surely now admit that the remarks I have made justify what I said at their commencement; for as a matter of fact they have been so hasty and fragmentary that it is evident I was not then moved by any spirit of false modesty. I believe they form all I can now usefully say generally on the

question before the House, in reply to the various speakers who have taken part in this debate.

It has been said in the course of it, and may well be said again, that in passing this bill, the House is paying a debt due to our heroic dead. Yes, we have a debt indeed, but do not let us imagine we can ever pay it. There is no way whatever, there is no one of all the laws Parliament can make, however great be its power, there is no way to furnish the child with a substitute for the affection of the father he has lost. This only we can indeed believe and hope, that each of these fatherless ones of ours may find a comfort and a compensation in the pride he will feel in being the child of him who gave his life for so grand an ideal (*Loud cries of « Hear, hear ! »*); just as the fairest, the most useful part of my own life is linked with the memory of the good done by my lamented father. And if indeed we have a duty, our duty is this: that wherever there is a need to be met, wherever there is a tear to be dried from off the cheeks of those so dear to us, the means shall not be wanting: and in the name of the Government, — aye, and here I have the right and the power to say, in the name of Italy, — that duty we shall not fail to do. (*Loud cheers. Members in large numbers hasten to congratulate the Home Secretary.*)



## THE ITALIAN WAR ADMINISTRATION

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*Rome, before the Council of State, Dec. 28th, 1916*

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In the days we now are living, with the events crowding fast upon one another which are creating the great world-story, it is not merely the year that closes and the new year that comes into being, but every hour that runs its course and yields place to another, which determines, so to speak, a mysterious transmission of powers from what we may term a cycle of story at its close to another just beginning. And since this is so, it is surely not out of place to give a rapid glance back on what the Italian administration has effected in the face of the catastrophic situation created by this tremendous war; — and to do so here, during this solemn ceremony, in the presence of this high Assembly, which may be said to represent the whole administration of Italy. We have found ourselves confronted by difficulties truly gigantic. They rose up before us unexpected and unforeseen; so as to baffle all calculation, mislead all foresight, render null all plans of action, inadequate all prognostics. Not merely have some departments of administration had to be quadrupled in scope and action: new departments too have had to be formed from the void, foreign to all tradition, all precedent, allowing of no pause, no respite: I may instance the

establishment of formidable commercial organisations under State control, imposing on it tremendous responsibilities, — the grain trade, the coal trade, the transport by sea, It is not fair to judge of the efforts made in these various directions by the criticisms and lamentations they have provoked, even if both criticisms and lamentations were — (as in part they certainly are) — too well founded. As in the body natural the specific sensibility of an organ is only perceived when illness attacks it, so in the body politic the public are only sensible to the working of the various branches of public administration when these ill discharge their functions: the consequence being, of course, that the services of the State have to resign themselves to this, — to have the light beat on nothing that is theirs but their deficiencies. But granting this, we may still assert without fear of contradiction that on the whole the working of our public services has revealed the existence in our midst of energies never suspected. There have been cases, indeed, where real prodigies have been wrought; and the appalling difficulties the war has brought with it have been most bravely faced, in virtue, may we not say, of that wonderful faculty of improvisation, of rapidity, of readiness, which in us Latins is the compensation for the lack of the spirit of method and organisation.

### **The tasks of the Home Office.**

Consider for a moment merely the action of the Home Office, drained as it has been of the younger of its energetic workers, called in large numbers under arms. Not only has it seen multiplied tenfold the responsibility of the tasks it normally has to do; but it has also had to bear the heavy burden of new tasks and most weighty ones. For instance, what in

the world could the Department over which I preside have had ready at hand, what means or agencies, to enable it to deal all of a sudden, as it now deals day after day, with the housing, the maintenance, nay even the clothing, of two hundred thousand souls, for so many as these we have on our hands, the majority of them formerly citizens of Austria, whom for various reason the war has forced to abandon their home and the place of their birth? Then, again, innumerable are the new lines of action rendered necessary by the war in the system of police: — special rules as to foreigners and enemies' subjects; frequent and minute limitations prescribed, not only in commerce and consumption, but also in all our usual relations and the ordinary forms of social life; special fetters imposed on almost all the rights of individual liberty. And the difficulty is greater and more complex, in that (as I have already had occasion to point out) in time of war political liberty is no longer an end in itself, but must subordinate itself, and, if need be, sacrifice itself to the safety of the State, failing which liberty too is overthrown. The criterion of its limitation, then, is no longer a normal principle precise and absolute, but a standard of utility variable and fortuitous.

There are many things the public knows nothing about; and this not merely owing to the special form alluded to above which its sensibility takes, but, in the case we are considering, from due political prudence. No one, for instance, has any idea of the miracles wrought by the sanitary administration in raising a barrier before the ills by which army and people have been menaced; but we may with patriotic pride here draw the comparison between ourselves and our enemy; for, all rhetoric apart, the very mention of him reminds us of those barbarians, who in their invasions brought us with the war all possible forms of pestilence. Yes, in the prisoners we captured from him, in the places we occupied, in the

very trenches we won, he left us, that enemy, the germs of all the most terrible epidemics that pathology has to tell of.

These nineteen months of war, you see, have meant for us a constant source of anxieties the country knew nothing about and we can only now venture to speak of, — now that we can with satisfaction base our energies, nay our invulnerability to the menaces of the future, on the splendid victories of the past.

### **The Police in particular.**

As to the police and their work for the order and safety of the State, — if here too our functionaries have given no less proofs of efficiency and self-abnegation, still it has been very much more difficult here, — and could not but have been, — to bring an adequate defence to bear against the potent energies of offence. The enemy had established in advance a formidable organisation. Methodically, sagaciously, patiently, he had long before foreseen, calculated, arranged everything. He had spared no pains to construct a perfect mechanism of information and documentation, of subtle insinuation and penetration into our life and spirit. And this he did not merely by State agency. He had here for his fellow-worker that spontaneous aid from the natural bent of the German mind, which makes every citizen, whatever be his calling or condition, a voluntary functionary, so to speak, who, when he finds himself abroad, examines, observes, notes down and communicates his observations, on behalf of the State.

Very different is it in all such matters in Italy. Our secular traditions, to begin with, make all such forms of activity profoundly repugnant to us; and again our temperament, hospitable, open, confiding, makes it difficult for us to adapt ourselves to suspicious

vigilance and provident precautions; and when at last bitter delusion rouses suddenly, without any middle stage of transition, scorn and wrath, the reaction provoked by these sentiments fails, owing to their very excess, to aid the ends of an enlightened defence; for, to fight on equal terms, snare must be met with snare and the arts of treachery with arts equally veiled and occult.

And so amongst us the police are left almost alone to carry on the struggle, under less favourable conditions than their antagonists. I am not referring here to the scanty financial resources by which their efforts are hampered; — nor to our inheritance from the past of that long series of memories not yet outworn, owing to which we are poles asunder from admiration or affection for the police system as constituting not only a force indispensable to civil existence but one of the noblest professions a man can devote himself to, from its essentially moral aim and from the spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice that ought to inspire it, as a warfare in the service of ideal well-doing.

I mean simply this: — that our police has retained a form of organisation which places it in certain respects in a position of inferiority to that particular form of crime, which constitutes espionage. The police are organised on a basis of territorial districts and fettered in their work by this limitation. Espionage, on the contrary, is a crime which has this essential characteristic, that its action is fragmentary and dispersed over a wide area, so that in the same offence there are always persons who take part, operating in different places, far from one another, and shifting swiftly from place to place, with little mutual acquaintance, while all these innumerable strings are calmly pulled by one who stands far away, safe and sound on neutral territory. Then again, espionage is a crime the hunting down of which demands above all the keen, penetrating, unwearied exercise of the faculty of investigation; and this can only be found

in a body of functionaries trained specially and exclusively to this end.

Now our police functionary, on the other hand, is, speaking generally, called on to perform a number of duties of the most varied nature, some purely bureaucratic, others merely coercive; and that of investigation is so fused and commingled with the rest as to render impossible an exact determination of relative capacities; while, apart from this, it is difficult enough to find men at all, who have a natural talent for subtle detective-work; and then, when we have found them, they have to be taken in hand and trained till all their faculties have been sharpened to the utmost possible degree. Well, spite of these difficulties, the unequal contest has been sustained in virtue of the admirable zeal of our functionaries and of some wisely ordered, though necessarily imperfect, emendations of their organisation, aiming at rendering this defensive action of the State independent as far as possible of territorial limits and the multiplicity of services it was called upon to render. The details of these improvements in organisation have not been divulged, and it is not advisable even now to make them public: just as it is not advisable to make publicly known the undeniable value of the results that have accrued to us from them. The jealous secrecy imposed upon us by the delicacy of this matter requires us not only to face the trivial sacrifice involved in the renunciation of the satisfaction of our political and bureaucratic *amour propre*, but to defy no less the charge that enough in this direction is not being done.

### Ever more energy in the work!

It is well, however, and useful too, that this charge should be made, not only here, but in all the branches of political and administrative action. The sight of what we have done should but spur us on to do more. And this not merely from the serenely ethical point

of view, in order, I mean, that the source may not be dried up which stirs to motion new energies and feeds the impulse to higher effort. There is another reason far more tangible and far more urgent. The pace of this gigantic war is becoming ever more and more accelerated, as it tends towards its close. We all feel, or if we some of us fail in perception, we all *ought* to feel, how time and the events time brings are pressing upon us. Difficulties multiply every day more, and every day we must multiply more our efforts. When we seem to have done all we could, we must still persuade ourselves that there are yet steps onward we must take. This war, the tragic immensity of which we may well say surpasses not only all our intellect can comprehend but all our imagination can conceive, this war, I say has worn down not only men but methods. What at its beginning and during its first months might have seemed sufficient, now suffices no longer; what was useful then, now is harmful.

On the other hand, not to follow *pari passu* the accelerated rhythm of the war, means to see oneself left behind by events, means to expose the Country to the most terrible menaces. Now more than ever all our nerves must be braced, all our faculties multiplied to frenzied effort; so that the war may be carried on with ever greater intensity in this period when the crisis that is to decide it, is so clearly drawing nigh to us.

Men and methods that up to now have been of useful service to us, if they are now worn-out or inadequate, are tossed aside, without even the tribute of a moment's stirring of gratitude or regret, just as one tosses away the ladder one has mounted by. The one thing needed is to conquer; and to conquer it is vital that we should know how to resist one instant more than our enemy.

This instant of greater resistance is the decisive element, which gives their worth to all the wealth lavished, all the sufferings endured, all the sorrows

borne, and last but not least, all the sacred, pure blood of our brothers and our sons, so generously shed. In the thought of that blood, above all, Gentlemen, we ought every one of us to brace our will, every one of us to multiply our energies, from this supreme Council of Administration of Italy down to the workshop within whose walls rude labour toils ardent, panting, sleepless on, — that so our war may be ever more intensely waged, that so the spirit of war may ever be in us more fervidly resolute.



## THE PROTECTION AND AID OF THE FATHERLESS OWING TO THE WAR

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*Before the Senate, March 8th, 1917*

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Sig. V. E. ORLANDO, Home Secretary — During this lofty and unruffled debate, worthy of the exalted and serene environment in which it has had place, some speakers have limited themselves to the consideration of special points, important I admit, in the bill now before the Senate; while others have devoted the whole or some part of their speeches to the discussion of the question which is the very heart and soul of the matter in hand.

As to the special points so referred to, I will deal briefly with them at once, if only to clear the ground for the discussion of the main question before us. My review of them will be rapid, may be even incomplete, reserving for our debates on the several clauses in detail any remarks that may be necessary on my part to fill up any possible lacunæ.

With regard then to the anxiety of my honourable friend, Senator Carlo Ferraris, as to the appropriation of the funds of Dotal Endowments in favour of the fatherless owing to the war, — I will say at once with perfect frankness that I perfectly understand the repugnance which is in general excited by all such appropriations to other ends of the funds of public charitable institutions, — nay, to a certain extent, I myself share this repugnance. But with no less

frankness let me say that the special point of view, which causes my honourable friend this anxiety and has led him to propose an amendment to this part of the bill, does not trouble me in the very least. And after all, my honourable friend's intervention has not taken the form of discussing the question, which might well be most grave, most fertile of debate, most thorny, — the question, I mean, whether subventions that take the form of charitable grants of marriage portions are to be considered a mode of beneficent action which the sentiment of our day is to approve or the reverse, — a matter, I repeat, greatly fertile of debate and greatly debated: — what makes my honourable friend so anxious, is the demographic void the war has brought with it; and looking at the matter from this point of view he has told the House that it will not be well to do aught that may diminish the forces tending to repopulation.

Now frankly I believe that as to filling the void in question, there are other forces that will look after this; while, if these forces failed to lend effective and sufficient aid, I very much doubt whether we should be much helped by the dowries. To be brief, and not to plunge once more into the whole vast question of the utility of these dotal charities, I will tell the House frankly that I hesitated myself whether to give my approbation to this part of the bill; but, my hesitation was vanquished by the report of the Civil Administration. Positive fact had more weight with me here than any abstract consideration. The Senate knows that, practically, such an appropriation of funds in favour of foundling children already takes place; and the fact that we have been able to appropriate in this way more than 2,000,000 francs, without one word of protest, without one word of complaint, (and we all know how sensitive public opinion is amongst us whenever vested interests are meddled with, and how it always finds the channel to make its protests heard), — this fact has with me very

great weight indeed. And my honourable friend is so fully conscious of the necessity of employing these two millions for this lofty end, the aid of the fatherless, that he proposes to increase from one to three millions the grant from the Treasury. Believe me, Senator Ferraris, this would be a too easy-going way of doing things; and I for my part could not give my consent to it without previous arrangements to this end with the Minister at the Treasury. Let me make my meaning perfectly clear to the House. All that there is need to do for the fatherless the State is bound to do, because it is its duty, because its honour is pledged; but as the needs will always be in excess of the means at our disposal, my honourable friend should be convinced with me that, if these two millions are left to the dowries, they will be lost to the fatherless from the war, with no possibility whatever of compensation.

Passing now to Senator Gatti, he dwelt specially on the general lines of the scheme we propose; — and I congratulate him because, though he is not a specialist in the field of Public Law, still the prompt intuition public life gives the man who has lived it, has enabled him in this debate to offer a weighty contribution in favour of the bill I am now defending before this illustrious Assembly. His remarks on special points in it too, such as the staff at the Prefectures to be assigned to the Provincial Committees, the greater or less sphere of action to be granted to the Charity Corporations of the Communes in the work of aid to the fatherless, the speedy formation of a clear and sufficient body of regulations, these are suggestions I may possibly see my way to incorporating in the bill; or in any case we shall be given an opportunity to consider them again, if it seems good to the House, when we are discussing the clauses in which these matters are specially dealt with.

My honourable friend, Senator Mortara, whom I

regret not to see in his place here to-day, in the first part of his speech has traced with a master-hand the lines which must be followed in all that pertains to the logical and juridical reconstruction of the scheme under debate; and he must allow me to offer him, not my admiration — for he has no need of it, — but, my warmest thanks. He has besides dealt with several special points, the most important of which was this; — the doubt whether it is advisable that the judge in the Court of Wards should be called to take part in the Provincial Committee. He referred to the juridical capacity that characterizes the judge, as contrasted with the administrative capacity that characterizes the Provincial Council; and as it seemed to me, hinted at the danger from these two capacities being united in one and the same corporation. Now that there should be doubts on this head in such a man, most assuredly cannot but make a certain impression also on me. Still, I cannot after all share his doubt, for the following reason of nature eminently technical, which I wil but briefly refer to here, reserving my right, as I have already said, to return to it later on, as we are dealing here with matters which, when discussed in detail may well give occasion to lengthy debates; — and the reason is this, that here the juridical capacity of the judge is to be taken in a sense quite other than that it properly connotes.

Here we are, *ex hypothesi* dealing with voluntary jurisdiction. Now Mancini and Pisannelli, in their classic commentaries on the Code of Procedure, had already shown how this so-called voluntary jurisdiction should rather be termed executive action, Government action, and constitutes a form of police action: though owing to the weighty interests intermingled with it, it is thought best to entrust it to a magistrate. And when from Mancini we pass to Mortara, Mortara himself in that golden treatise of his on judicial right has condensed this thought into a single

pithy phrase, telling us that in the expression « voluntary jurisdiction » the substantive is a mistake and the adjective is another, as it is not « jurisdiction » and it is not « voluntary ».

If, then, the action of the judge here is to be understood as a contribution, however circumscribed by the most prudent limitations, to what is essentially police action, — (I need not say that I use the term « police » in the classic sense of the word), — then I really cannot share in the *a priori* repugnance to the possibility that the judge of the Court of Wards should take part in the action of this administrative body for the wardship and aid of the fatherless.

My honourable friend, Senator Chironi, in the speech in which his profound culture was fired by impassioned eloquence, was chiefly concerned with this; — that in the bill now before us we have not touched the chord of family feeling, the praises of which he sang, awakening the most responsive echo in every Senator's heart and in mine.

An islander no less than he, I am of a race in which the sentiment of family has still something patriarchal about it, to be traced back and back, through those thousand years to which my honourable friend alluded, nay farther yet, till, I might almost say, it finds itself at last in the tents of our Aryan progenitors. And, keen as is my ardour, fervid as is my enthusiasm, for the principles of liberty and of progress, still when the family is in question, I am led by instinct, strive as I may to curb it by reason, to be and to declare myself conservative, — nay, conservative in the most rigid sense of the word. (*Comments.*)

But from this very point of view of respect for family sentiment, the bill, in my opinion, as it now stands, after the labour on it both of the Chamber and the Senate — (for as to this part of it there is no difference of opinion worth mentioning between Government and Committee), — may be said to be

hedged round with every safeguard that could be wished. And the principle that inspires it is to shun the creation of a phalanstery after the Spartan mode, through which the children of our heroes would be removed from the family circle; for both Chamber and Senate have shown that they will have none of such a principle.

Well, then, « Your conclusion? », you will ask.

Well, then, my conclusion is that the definition « fatherless owing to the war », contained in an administrative law, can have no effects which can give rise to judicial declarations.

Passing now to the two special points referred to by my honourable friend, Senator Chironi, — in reference to the first all I have to say is, that with regard to the possible cession of the guardianship by the mother, (Clause 18), the Senatorial Committee has introduced a modification, and I accept it in its entirety; so that there is surely nothing more to be said on the matter.

The other point referred to by my honourable friend concerns the declaration of affiliation. There is — (it is impossible to deny it) — a certain antinomy, in admitting into our legislation an inquiry into paternity for a particular end. « I have nothing to object » — said my honourable friend on this score, — « to the inquiry into paternity; but then why only for the fatherless owing to the war and not in other cases? » « In so acting », he went on, « you prejudice indirectly and by a side-wind, so to speak, a question that has given rise to so much grave debate and been so hotly disputed ». Well, my honourable friend's anxiety on this head is, in my opinion, academic, (I mean in the better sense of the word): I appeal to him not to sacrifice a definite, real, tangible advantage to an anxiety about what is, as I have said, academic and doctrinaire.

My honourable friend should bear in mind that it was in consequence of the approval of the bill by the

Committee of the Chamber of Deputies that this declaration of affiliation was admitted in the sole case (remember) of the fatherless owing to the war, and so as in no way to affect the question in any other sense whatsoever; and it is in consequence of this, too, that the Vice-regent's decree on the granting of pensions recognises the natural children of soldiers who have fallen in the war. Now could it be well to sacrifice this large and useful concession to an anxiety which is after all but a matter of logic and systematisation?

Besides, my honourable friend should not forget, we have a precedent in our legislation, a precedent in a certain sense graver, — in my opinion, graver far than the one before us, — the inquiry, I mean, into maternity, sanctioned by the law as to foundlings.

As to the ascertainment of the child's maternity, this principle is already law; is already among our ordinances, to the sole end (as I have just said) of the law with regard to foundlings.

And this enactment has given rise to no ill consequences of any sort whatsoever. And yet, as Minister of Grace and Justice when it became law, I felt at the time the very gravest anxiety; for the inquiry into maternity is a far graver matter than this other inquiry now, by exception, admitted in the case of the fatherless owing to the war. For from the point of view of the social ethics of our age, of that sentiment of honour which owes not its origin to abstract principles but to custom, social and individual, it is a far graver matter to lay to a girl's charge the bringing-forth of a child than it is to lay to a young man's charge the begetting it, — nay, according to conventional morality, this second hypothesis bears with it no dishonour, while the first most undoubtedly does so,

And now, after these preliminary remarks, — though there are other points which may well need further reference when we proceed to the discussion

of the clauses in detail, — I come to the essential matter under debate.

And here, first of all, I have a word to say to those speakers whose aim in what they said was conciliation, — to the honourable Senator Tittoni, whose weighty and convincing speech we heard yesterday, and to my honourable and dear friend, Senator Villa, whose forcible arguments we listened to to-day. For I wish to state at once that I am far from desiring to veto any attempt at conciliation, — not, of course, because the matter in hand can or ought to lend itself to compromise, for it is not matter negotiable, — but because I feel in duty bound to admit (and I frankly confess) that, in this bill, as approved by the Chamber, certain lacunæ have been detected, on further examination of it by this authoritative Assembly, which it would not be well to leave in it. And to be more precise still : — in my opinion the Chamber has allowed itself to be too much absorbed in the circumference and has somewhat neglected the centre ; and so, as though to render like for like, the Senatorial committee has, according to my idea, become too much wrapped up in the centre to the neglect of the circumference,

Perhaps the *ubi constam* of a scheme which should be as near as possible to perfection, is to be found in leaving intact the scheme in its essential lines, as it was built up by the Chamber, but in reinforcing, strengthening, rendering more authoritative, more vigorous, the central action, — so organizing it that the Home Secretary, whose duty — (I am not pleading for myself, a mere passing figure, but for my successors) — whose duty it should be to vindicate the right, or (shall we say) whose right it should be not to stand aside from the supreme duty, which the tragic European conflict has created for us as for the other States, — the duty, namely, of providing with untiring care for the fatherless children of our soldiers, — so arranging, I repeat, that the Minister be aided



in his work not by a Council of directors-general, but by a Council more authoritative, the offspring of a more comprehensive method of selection. Proceed on these lines, — and I have not a word to utter against it.

But having said so much, — which by the way will be further useful as a proof to the Senate that I am fettered by no stubborn, obstinate, preconceived determination to go my own road — I am bound to say, with no less plainness and frankness, that I cannot accept the plan proposed by the Senatorial Committee.

Where is the essential point of variance? I mentioned it a moment ago: — is the centre of gravity of our task, of our responsibility in our care of the fatherless, to be at the centre or at the circumference? Is the care of the fatherless to be organized as a task essentially in the province of the State, or is it to be entrusted, — I was almost going to say, abandoned, — to an organisation noble, very noble if you please, but still, for all that, artificial?

This is the question that divides us. Now undoubtedly, as the precedents that form part, may I not say, of our history of contemporary law cannot but have great weight in the decisions we have to make on the new problems we have to deal with, it is inevitable — (and it would not be well if it were not so) — that when considering the aid to be rendered by the State to the fatherless owing to the war, we should call to mind the precedent of the aid the Italian State was called upon to render when confronted with that terrible catastrophe of Nature's working, the earthquake in Calabria and Sicily in 1908. Then the problem was solved by the creation of a National Charity, the Queen Elena Orphanage. And in the creation of that Charity some part was mine, I do not venture to say of merit, because in such cases the conception means something far lower in value than the actuation; — what I would rather say is this, — that both the

then Minister and my honourable friend who presented the report of the Senate's Committee have now to make good their claims as regards the Queen Elena Orphanage, but that incomparably superior are the claims of my honourable friend, who has devoted himself so admirably and so fruitfully to the interests of that Institution: — still, some little claim is mine too, for the creation of the Institution is my work, as the then Keeper of the Seals. Well, this precedent is being referred to, nay it inevitably, spontaneously presents itself: — obviously, it may not be without influence, and as a matter of fact it has exercised a very considerable influence on the debate which is in course to-day.

But the influence it has exerted upon my honourable friend has had the effect of counselling him to found a National Charity also for the fatherless owing to the war: — while upon me, on the other hand, though I too may in a spiritual sense claim the paternity of the Queen Elena Orphanage, this influence has had the effect of convincing me that we should not do now as we did then, because the difference between the two cases is so profound, that what might then have been and indeed was a boon would now be indisputably an evil. And why? Because in the case of the earthquake in Calabria and Sicily the question presented itself in the form of aid to children who were as foundlings in their abandonment. It is so stated in the very text of the decree establishing the Orphanage. There was no question here of guardianship or of relief as such, — as essentially, peculiarly, a function of the State: — on the contrary, it was a question of pure benevolence, the rescue and the sheltering of the child in his utter abandonment; for in that terrible earthquake he had lost not only his father, but often his mother too, and his maternal and paternal grandfather. Why even sometimes children were left so absolutely alone, that I believe to the present day no one knows what their name is and

what family they belong to, The task, then, was essentially one of pure benevolence, which the State was essentially unfit to discharge, for I have no confidence in the State, as the shelterer, the maintainer, the nurse of children : for these tasks my confidence is in private Institutions, of course under the most rigid system of inspection.

But in the present case, on the other hand, the great majority of these children, thank God, have still their mother. The father, fallen in the war was as a rule a young man, even if we take into account the oldest classes. As a rule, the mother is alive ; it is possible enough that there are grandparents as well.

Now one of the dangers of the creation of a National Charity may well be just this : — the settling of the question after a manner perfectly contrary to that our minds and hearts are bent on.

And to tell the truth, I shuddered when my honourable friend, Senator Ferraris, without observing that in so doing he was giving the strongest support, lending aid incalculable, to my own view of the matter, put this question to us : — « Do you realise why it is well that there should be a National Charity ? Because, as other such Charities of the kind have already been founded, one fine day we shall be able to weld them into one. » But the Charities my honourable friend is speaking of are shelters, Homes : while here on the other hand, we are arguing on the hypothesis of the State's lofty task of guardianship. The day on which we amalgamate these State Charities with the private ones, that day will come into being the danger the insight of my honourable and dear friend, Senator Chironi, has detected, which led him to assert that, from his point of view, he preferred the bill as it came up to you for the Chamber. And a danger there is, and it is this : — that the national organisation, — as my honourable friend, Senator Chimirri would create it, — should tend, however involuntarily, to widen its range of work so as to include the sphere of operation

that is forbidden it, that sphere in which the Queen Elena Orphanage has up to now been doing such inestimable service. But *non est hic opus*, this is not the work it is called upon to do.

But even if we prefer to look at the question from the most obvious point of view, or shall I say, the most common-place, — the numerical, — it is to be considered that the Queen Elena Orphanage had entrusted to it perhaps not more than 4000 orphans, and that the sphere of its operation was but a single province, for it was limited to a part of the Province of Messina and a part of the Province of Reggio Calabria. But we have now 69 provinces to extend our care over; and while after the catastrophe of the earthquake in Sicily and Calabria the orphaned children could be counted by thousands, here they will have to be counted by tens of thousands.

Well then, this central organisation, which, *ex hypothesi*, as a consequence of its very existence and aim, is to embrace the control of a number of fatherless children that can hardly be much less than 100 000, for there will not be one of the eight thousand eight hundred Communes of Italy that will not bear this title, at once of honour and of woe, to have its fatherless owing to the war, — this organisation, if it is to collect together these orphaned children as we were able to do for those orphaned by the earthquake at Messina, and is to have them in the same way under its eye, will be obliged to establish ten or twelve such rallying camps.

Is every commune in Italy to be called on to intensify the energy of its working, to intensify it a hundredfold?

Or how are you going to proceed?

Have you in your mind to create for the end we have in view an organisation so gigantic, so mastodontic, that it is to preside from Rome over the management of a hundred thousand children scattered all over Italy?

But, putting aside for a moment the mere hard facts of the case: — let us consider it from the point of view of principle.

I believe in principles, perhaps because I have held a University chair; — and I am proud of it. I am a Minister now; but I am far from wishing to hide from whence I sprang. I believe in principles, because they are the quintessence of reality and of experience: — they are experience reduced to its lowest terms.

Now from the point of view of principle, the question is of a fascinating nicety; but as I have already said, the harvest here has already been garnered in the speech delivered yesterday before this House by my honourable friend, Senator Mortara.

He, as I have said, and can but say once more, has laid down the matter on lines absolutely definitive, — lines that live in my memory in all their flawless synthesis.

What in the task in question? The task of wardship. Here is no act of charity or of giving shelter: here we are dealing with a function of the State, if ever there was one, with a function of the State *par excellence*, — with wardahip.

Now, can this function of the State be delegated?

Yes, it can; — but with much in the way of qualification. It may be delegated by-exception; and to the delegation of a State function corresponds that form, that notion of administrative right, which is termed autarchy.

But, before all, the body vested thus with State functions must have a *raison d'être*, a reason for its existence.

The State that so recognizes it, must hold it worthy of the confidence implied in this its act of delegation.

A typical example of an autarchic body, is the Commune.

There is, then, on the very hypothesis of such a body, something that already exists, something that

pre-exists the recognition and above all the delegation. But, here, what is there that pre-exists, what is there at this moment? Nothing.

The Commission — (and I say this in its praise) — created itself out of nothingness: it has taken to itself two senators, — (and here, to avoid all misunderstanding, it is well that I should say that none of these representatives are delegates of the various bodies; for if it were so, we should find ourselves landed in the most astounding absurdities), — two deputies of the Chamber, a member of the Court of Appeal, a Councillor of State, a deputy attorney-general, some superior officers, some representatives of the National Institutions before referred to: — and thus it has formed a Council.

The body thus created is eminently artificial.

I admit that from beneath the magic fingers of an artist like my honourable friend, Senator Chimirri, may come forth a statue, fair and even with the grace to please, since tastes are free; but as we are no longer in the days of gods and demigods, let the artist be never so enamoured of his creation, there is no god hath power to give this work of his life: — the statue breathes not. (*Laughter.*)

In any case, even if we admit the delegation of the sovereign power, — (and here my honourable friend must allow me to express my firm belief that contradiction is impossible), — we admit it in a form necessarily decentralized, whether on territorial grounds or as a consequence of the matter in hand, but in such way as always and necessarily to secure, that at any given moment of the work of the delegates that action of the State may always intervene, which is inseparable from the conception of the delegation of a power of sovereign character, that hands over a more or less extensive capacity of execution, while reserving to itself the right to resume its power, whenever it pleases. The Commune has its autonomy, has its powers delegated by the State, for its working

takes place in a sphere that is the State's and is sovereign; but it has too, the Prefect at its elbow, it has the Provincial Administrative Council, and it is liable to inspection, to suspension, to annulment, to the intervention of the prefectural commissary, to the dissolution of the Communal Administration: its action, then, is an action delegated and of the State, no doubt: and yet see how much the State has reserved to itself.

But what do you reserve to the State, in regard to this creation of yours? Nothing. And you reserve nothing, because you can concede nothing: you are the prisoner of the error you have made. And this is why I said just now — (you see what right I had to remind you of my fidelity to principles), — why I said: « Yes, it is possible, the delegation of a power of the State, but at a moment of decentralisation, and in such wise that another moment be postulated, the moment of controlling revision.

But as the power you delegate — (and this is the most subtle point in our criticism and the most decisive), — as this power you delegate to the organisation you are bringing into being, is a power eminently centralized, eminently primary, is the starting principle, the beginning, — you arrive at delegating to the National Organisation, as an essential part of its working, all that is most peculiarly, inseparably the work of the State, in other words, the inspection. For an essential part of your work is inspection of the nature that is, *par excellence*, the State's.

You, in respect to the smaller bodies, the Provincial Committees, reserve to yourselves the very same powers which the State reserves in respect to the Communes; and thus you have placed yourselves so high up that it is impossible to go higher; it is only logical that to the Home Secretary you give nothing.

Your intentions may be generous; but as you have already put yourselves at the apex, and as the Supreme, the Sovereign, is a superlative, there can be nothing

in the wide world that remains your superior. What, I ask, do you leave to the Home Secretary? A mere approval of balance-sheets. And as the accounts cannot but prove correct, because the funds at disposition remain in the hands of the Charity, the balance-sheet will assuredly present no error. Well, this, and nothing else, is left to the Home Secretary.

«The State», says Clause 1, according to the Senatorial Committee, — «assumes the protection and aid of the fatherless owing to the present war, and exercises these functions through the agency of a body to be called the National Institution for the Fatherless owing to the War, with the co-operation of the bodies indicated in the present law, (local bodies), and under the high superintendence of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs».

Now I am well aware that I am addressing a most erudite Assembly, nay one in which there is an abundance of professional jurists in the higher sense of the term; and so I will lay before you an argument which is specially addressed to them.

A law is made valid by the abstract declaration of principles only so far as this abstract declaration is followed up by definite arrangements, through which the declaration is put into practice; otherwise, to do law-making means to do nothing. You have said that this Charity is subject to inspection by the Home Secretary: but you forget all about this inspection; in the rest of your bill, you say no single word more about it. Well, then, how is it to be put into practice?

There is no form of establishment which determines, which lays down, the effective range of this general right of inspection. You have, then, given nothing. And mark, we have a precedent most apt in this connection; we have a case precisely similar; and therefore, I repeat, we have here a point essentially technical, to which I venture specially to call the attention of the jurists in this honourable Assembly. The present Communal and Provincial Law, Clause 127,



Section 1, runs as follows: — « The Charitable and Benevolent Institutions are subject to the inspection of the Communal Council » (the word is the same — « inspection ») — « which has power always to examine into their working and verify their accounts ». The Clause I have quoted from the Communal and Provincial Law, concise as it is, is, as you see, less concise than our Clause 1, because it does at least contain something in the way of specification. Well call up before you every item of judicial and administrative jurisprudence on this Clause 127, and it will tell you that this authority of the Communes over the pious Foundations does not exist. Oh yes, the law has said so; but as it has laid down no definite method of procedure, the result is, that a Communal Council will be allowed to talk of charity, that a prefect will not annul a resolution passed by a Communal Council because it refers to a Pious Foundation, that a Communal Council will be allowed to send an appeal to the Home Secretary; but what is absolutely certain is, that whenever a Commune has tried to see into the working of any such Institution, to send an inspector to it, to examine its books, the reply has been: — « No, you have no right: true, the law says so, but it has laid down no method of procedure in such cases ». And equally so. it clear that the right of inspection, « high » as you have rendered it, of the Home Secretary, will never come into effective operation in any way whatsoever. And here I might put a test question or two to you. To-morrow or the day after, let us suppose, this Central Committee decides that all the fatherless shall be brought up in a certain religion; or that they shall not be brought up in any religion: — well, what will the Home Secretary do with his high right of inspection, what effective power will he have? Will he annul this resolution? Who gives him the right to?

But let us take a more practically definite case: — let us proceed to consider what will be the compe-

tence of this Central Committee: we are on even more practical ground here.

Clause 6 of the Scheme of your House's Committee lays down: «The Central Committee directs and coordinates the action of the Provincial Committees of the National Institution and of the associations having for their object the aid of the fatherless owing to the war». It takes upon itself, then, a task which is *par excellence* a State task, the task of inspection.

Further: — «In doubtful cases, decides who are to be considered fatherless owing to the war» — No very important power, comparatively speaking: — is it worth while to create a national institution for this? You can, if you will, entrust this function to a section of the Council of State, if it is solemn forms you are aiming at; or again you may confer it on the courts of law, and so you will be following pretty nearly the course recommended by my honourable friend Senator Chironi.

«... Administers the fund destined to the fatherless, and distributes it among the various Provincial Committees». Money of the State, then. Well from the moral point of view I have nothing at all to say against this, but from the political point of view a great deal, — that the State's money should be irresponsibly administered by any Committee whatsoever. The thing is without example, without precedent.

«... Makes out the balance-sheet of the National Charity». — What balance-sheet? With what funds? The National Charity comes to the birth in virtue of this Clause, and comes to the birth as poor as Job. As my honourable friend, Senator Mortara, very opportunely observed yesterday, even if we may reckon on the promptings of private benevolence, we may be sure that donor and testator alike will have in view above all the branch of the Charity in their Commune, or if we are prepared to take a step further than this, the branch in their Province; but of

this National Charity as a whole, few indeed, might I not say none, — will take thought. In any case, these are but fair hopes; but balance-sheets are not made up with hopes.

Well, the Clause gives on: — ... « By periodic inspection ensures the regular working of the Provincial Committees ». Who provides the inspectors for the National Charity?

It has been said wittily, and like all witticisms there may perhaps be a shade of exaggeration about it, that we should end by creating a Ministry of the Fatherless: but really, in practice, this would be but the simple truth; for this ponderous organisation must have its requisite machinery, it will have to correspond with 69 prefects, to have its inspectors, to have its clerks; in short, it will form a Home Office in miniature, and will land us at last in the bureaucracy.

Some one, I forget who, saw reason to criticize the plan proposed by the Chamber of Deputies, asserting that it would land us in the bureaucracy. But by the other plan we shall be landed there more than ever, and with a certain difference.

I thank my friend, Senator Villa, for his reference to our debt of gratitude to the bureaucracy, which, he said, has done much for us during the terrible struggles of this war.

It may perhaps have shown itself unequal to the needs the war has brought with it: but this is another matter. The difficulties have been greater than all and any human force; but in comparison with what has happened in the other States, we are able to assure the country that the Italian bureaucracy has faithfully discharged its duties. And the members of it at the Home Office, who have a fair and noble tradition, (I can say this without vain glory, for I have contributed little enough to it), have worthily maintained that tradition.

And yet there are those who would go so far as actually to expel, *manu militari*, the Prefect from the

Provincial Committee, refusing to allow him to form part of it; so that from these Committees, which for their existence and for their working have to rely on the various organisations in dependence on the Prefect. — Communes, for instance, Pious Foundations, Charitable Institutions, and so on, — the Prefect, who is to devote to them all his energies, render them all his aid, so that they may attain their end, the Prefect, I repeat, is to be expelled.

Now we, who are unfortunately the people most prone of all to criticism and to calumny, and we who live in public life where petty gossip blossoms as the orange-tree, have still to recognize and affirm that the influence of politics on beneficence, the subjection of Pious Foundations to political ends, are things we very rarely hear talked of; and the absence of criticism and of malevolence in this quarter should surely give us the conviction that the working of Pious Foundations is not dominated by politics and that it is not true that to politics the Prefect is enslaved.

You have here but a motive for anxiety and alarm, which has sometimes prompted us to put it from us as a bitter cup. The truth is, you would fain not have the bureaucracy; but as a matter of fact, you will create a new bureaucracy and most assuredly a more costly one, possibly one less adapted to your purpose.

The Home Secretary, on the other hand, may well undertake this task. I do not mean to say that he can work the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, but he will try his hardest to do his duty. What measures are taken in the future, will depend on the counsel to be given us by experience. If it turns out that instead of eight inspectors we must have ten, we will have them; if we must create two or three more heads of departments, they will be created; but I hope we shall be able to dispense even with this,

When I see that the prefectures go on doing their work, with only a prefect, an assistant and a deputy-assistant, I may well hope that these new duties too may be assumed without increased burdens. We must found this National Charity and furnish it with all that aid from the bureaucracy of which it may stand in need.

I fear I have trespassed too far on the patience of the Senate by so long a speech. I will only say in conclusion that I remain firm in supporting the scheme and structure of the bill, as it stands after the unanimous vote of the Chamber of Deputies; but I am prepared, too, to accept, — (as indeed I have already clearly stated), — those amendments which may tend to the general improvement of the bill. But as to the kernel of it, the constitution, I mean, of the Committee, this is a question, Gentlemen, on which I can admit no compromise.

It was nobly said in the report by my honourable friend, Senator Chimirri, that the end we have in view unites us in such wise that no preconception, no suspicion, no doubt as to secondary political motives, can enter to cloud the serenity of this our debate. Still, there may be a consideration I would term not political, but of a political nature: grant me this refinement of thought, as such a distinction has already been made by one of the speakers who preceded me, I think by the honourable Senator Tittoni. Although not of a political nature but purely technical, still there is a danger here of conflict between this House and the other branch of Parliament.

The Chamber of Deputies approved the scheme in this bill unanimously, with an admirable fusion of all parties, and approved it for reasons well weighed. Now if another scheme be substituted for its own, it may, I admit, recognize that it has erred and find the newly proposed scheme preferable; but it may, too, firmly, decidedly, persist in its own scheme, and

proclaim such a diversity of views as to disturb the union between the two Houses of Parliament and bring about a conflict between them. (*Murmurs.*)

This, Gentlemen of the Senate, I have thought it best to mention, — simply as a possibility. And I ask you now: — does it serve, does it aid the cause we have at heart, have so anxiously at heart, this scheme of yours which may be ground of conflict between the two Houses of Parliament?

I know full well that a conflict cannot and ought not to terrify any legislative assembly, when it has before it the vision, sure, noble, lofty, of the high end it is bent on attaining. And I hold that it is just and our bounden duty to struggle for the system we have espoused and to defend it, whensoever we are inspired by the consciousness that it is right so to do. And how can you doubt that any other opinion could possibly be mine? All I say is simply this: — can it be of aid to the matter in hand, to this loftiest of patriotic ends which to-day should unite and stir our hearts, that just this very scheme should become a possible source of conflict between the two branches of Parliament? In saying this I fail not one jot in respect for the liberty of the Senate; but the doubt that rises in my mind as to what may possibly happen, this, honourable Senators, I am none the less bound to make known to you.

For my own part, I repeat, if in homage to the concord invoked by the honourable Senator Tittoni it is necessary to accept something in the way of modification, which may better assure the future of this Institution, I am ready this very moment to accept it.

In any case, I feel sure, the Legislative bodies will so decide, that the Country's expectations will be realized in the establishment of all that is most useful, all that is most just, all that is most worthy, for the care of the fatherless children of those who have died for her,

When, in my wanderings at the front, I visit those humble cemeteries, in which the loving piety of their comrades has laid to rest the bodies of the fallen, I have borne in on me the impression the senses mark not but the spirit wholly realizes, of a light that irradiates from the tombs of those fallen ones, a light that is the reflection of all the beauty of the magnanimous sacrifice they have made, a light that is so to speak the weaving into one of all the aureoles with which glory has crowned the martyrdom of those our glorious brethren. And this day, Gentlemen, when the supreme Legislative Chamber of our Country is to have laid on it the duty to decide on the fate of that they have left us which is most sacred, on the fate of their children, full sure am I that from that light will descend on us so to speak a sacred inspiration, so that all we do may be truly worthy of those who have fallen, and may correspond to what was assuredly their last hope and their last thought, — the thought and the hope in which were blended into one the Fatherland for which they gave their life, the sons in whom their life is to be handed on. (*Loud and general applause, amid which the Minister receives the Senators' congratulations*).

## FOR THE SAFETY AND HONOUR OF ITALY

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies, Nov. 14th, 1917*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council  
— The military events of the last three weeks have placed Italy in a position the exceptional gravity of which there must be no thought of striving to attenuate in those who would speak as men strong of heart to a people so strong and firm of soul as the people of Italy has now shown itself. The enemy, owing to a combination of circumstances that have given him a good fortune beyond his hopes, has been enabled to bring against us preponderating forces. Italy has now fronting her, not only the whole Austrian army, or at least all the strong and effective elements in it, but also the most potent reserves of the army of Germany.

This was amply enough in itself to create for us a military situation full of difficulty, but other unfortunate circumstances have concurred to force upon us the necessity of a retreat, in order that the bulk of the army might be placed in safety.

And so, simply for strategic reasons, with bleeding hearts we have had to abandon without striking a blow not only the positions wrested from the enemy in thirty months of hard and glorious battle, but lands of Italy too, lands we may term more Italian than all that is left to her, because they kept proud



guard on her border. The Eastern portals of Italy were thrown open to the invader; and the enemy now lies encamped in cities that were bulwarks of the faith and soul of the Italian.

Our army, that had given so many wonderful proofs of valour, has thus experienced that change to adverse fortune, which the military history of all times shows that not even the armies most inured to arms and most glorious in them can escape. This army of ours, we lauded it on the day of victory: — with soul immutable we laud it in the hour of adversity. No need to remind you of the episodes of heroism and of sacrifice that shed over defeat itself a ray of epic light, when we proclaim once more that highest of all our faiths is our faith in our soldiers, when we assure them of our love and of our union that cannot be broken (*Cheers*). Those sons of ours know well that behind them stands a whole people, awaiting from them its salvation; that *there* are their homes and their families, *there* are the founts of their labour, of their liberty, of their dignity as men; *there* in a word, is Italy. (*Cheers*).

And the hearts of our soldiers will go out to meet the proud rallying-cry that rises from those members of our race, from those of our brethren, who invoke their land abandoned to the scourge of the destroyer. I have seen the long files of sorrowing ones, spreading out over all Italy: I have heard from them many a word of affliction and fond regret, but not one murmur of despair or of cowardly baseness, not one cry that was not of love for the Fatherland, whose destinies had laid upon them this great sacrifice. The sight of these infinite sorrows, so nobly borne, while it naturally evokes a glorious manifestation of national solidarity, imperatively lays on the Government certain clear duties, which it is doing its best to discharge, though amid a thousand difficulties created both by the greatness of the disaster in itself and

by the violent and unforeseen manner in which it has come upon us.

Meanwhile, among its first steps in this direction, the Government has in mind to arrange to compensate as far as possible for the temporary loss of the district tie by the renewal of the personal tie round the official bodies representative of the ordinary communities, and it has already established a Central Commissariat Board, through whose agency the State takes on itself the complex task of aid, and sets to work at the same time to face all the arduous problems which are linked with this formidable exodus of our brethren.

As to the parliamentary crisis, its very coincidence with the enemy's invasion seemed to demand before all and above all the greatest possible speed in its solution. Political valuations were in a certain measure determined by military and national necessity; so that the men called on to take office asked themselves no question as to the grounds for their nomination or the sufficiency of their powers: they believed they answered to an appeal which forbade, I will not say refusal, but even an instant's hesitation. The Government is profoundly conscious of the gravity of the hour. It is anxious to seize the earliest opportunity possible for a full and searching discussion of the situation, both as regards events in the past and plans for the future. But now, while an invading enemy still menacingly presses upon us, what is wanted is action, not discussion: — nay, discussion there must not be, if thereby maiming comes to action.

And a field of action was naturally offered us in the great advisability of establishing immediate and more intimate relations with our Allies; but swift as was our decision to this end, I am pleased to say that it was anticipated.

The eagerness with which the Allied Governments of France and England decided on the despatch of

their brave troops to join ours in our rally against the common foe, has awakened a profound echo in the hearts of the whole people of Italy.

Such prompt aid, given us so spontaneously, has proved once more how thorough and loyal is the union with us of France and of England; and indeed this is but what in the hour of adverse fortune Italy might have expected from them, after two and a half years of war bravely waged for common ideals. And at this moment, when English and French troops are on the point of ranging themselves in line by our side, I call on you to mark your sense of their valour and their loyal comradeship by the cheers of the Commons' House of Italy. (*Ministers and members rise to their feet. Loud, general and prolonged applause.*)

It is the first time that the proud troops of that wondrous manifestation of national will and force, the army of England, have come to fight on Italian soil: but already once before in the Crimea and now on the Macedonian front English soldiers and Italian have learnt to know and esteem one another. It is not, on the other hand, the first time that the blood of the army of France has bathed the soil of Italy in defence of liberty, — in defence of liberty for us at Magenta and at Solferino, in defence of liberty for all the nations of the world, on the morrow of these my words. And your Government feels so much the more the duty of recognizing and proclaiming these proofs of perfect union, for the very reason that one of the many perfidies of the enemy has been the invention and diffusion of malignant gossip as to unjustifiable neglect and vexatious conditions on the part of our Allies to our prejudice. It is well that the impure source of all such false rumours be made clear, so that every one who spreads them abroad may know that in doing so he renders himself the instrument more or less voluntary of the snares of our enemy.

Assuredly it cannot be denied that to the firm and

cordial union of the Allies of the *Entente* had up to now been wanting the animating and effective impulse of an organisation competent to act and swift in action. And this want has been supplied at the recent Conference at Rapallo, It was decided there to create a Supreme Political Council of the Allies, whose duty should be to arrange for the better co-ordination of the military operations in the various sections of the Western Front of war. And there was further constituted a permanent Military Consultative Committee, to assist the Supreme Council by the technical experience of the eminent generals chosen to be its members.

In these two new Councils will sit also representatives of the United States of America, that are now doing their part in the war on the Western Front. And in these our recent sad disasters, the great American Republic has given us solemn proofs of its powerful and willing co-operation, for which I hereby express the cordial gratitude of our Country. (*Loud and general cheers.*)

The Government has, further, perceived that it is its essential duty to keep itself always in touch with the Army and with the General in Supreme Command of it; and it reserves to itself the right to create, if need be, forms and modes which lend themselves to the better regulation and organisation of such relations. The Government knows that the army is the people in arms, and that one and immediate must be the power that represents it. Modern warfare being what it is, just as in war time there can be no political action independent of the war, so the direction of the war is most intimately linked with the needs of the complex life of the Country.

There are not two Italys, one where they fight and die, the other where they supply the men and the means the army has need of. There is one Italy only, one Government, one will, one duty only for

all. — to thrust back the enemy and to conquer him, to conquer him by the force of our arms, to conquer him by the resistance behind those arms of the Country. (*Hear, hear!*)

Gentlemen of the Chamber of Deputies, the enemy set before him two objects: — one military and one political: — to break the resistance of the army and to shatter the union of the Country. While our soldiers are fighting to raise a barrier against his military success, we can assuredly declare that his second object will not be attained. Many times already the need of concord has been urged in this House; and such appeals have won large response, if not unanimous. But now the solemn gravity of the hour confers far austerer sanction on this duty. Before the war was declared, it might without offence be held that it was not necessary. And after it was declared too, one could understand no less that there might be a varying estimate and consequently a dissent as to the objects of the war and the best way to arrive at peace, so long as Italy alone among the Continental Powers had the good-fortune to have no part of her national territory occupied by the foreigner. But now, in the presence of invasion by the enemy and his persistent pressure, no doubt, no hesitation is any longer possible: — he who now remains outside the firm bond of national union is a renegade to the name of Italian (*Loud cheers*); — and he who at this hour is a renegade to the name of Italian cannot be called a foreigner merely: he is an enemy. (*Cheers.*)

Convinced of the supreme need of such an assertion of national union, the Government was of opinion that only Parliament could give solemn and tangible expression to the will of the people of Italy, both in the face of the enemy and in the presence of our Allies, by proclaiming before the bar of the whole civilised world and of history, that the people of Italy consecrates once more its moral unity in the hour of calamity and affirms once more its invincible will to

bear every sacrifice, to submit to every rending of its members, but to hold high its head and fearless its heart throughout all adversity, faithful to the pledge of honour it took upon it when it stepped down into this strife for the triumph of Right and Justice among the Nations. (*Loud cheers.*)

The union of our Country, Gentlemen, was not made in the midst of victories and of rejoicing; it was made in the anguish of waiting and of renunciation for a season; it was made in sorrow and in solemn vow to avenge defeat. And here, in this Parliament, that has known days no less dark than these of ours, and knew in them how to make resistance to every threat, every baseness, every treason, here, in this Parliament is, all things told, the sacred hearth of the Fatherland, whence in the hour of peril should irradiate the glow, the fervid flame of Faith.

And in exalting Parliament thus, I include in it, nay I exalt above it, Him who is of that Parliament both part and Head, the August Sovereign, whose words rang in the ears of the people of Italy to rouse and fire them to action, and summed up in one supreme command that people's supreme duty: — « Be we each and all of us ready to give our all, for the victory and for the honour of Italy ! » (*Loud, general and most prolonged cheers. The Members of the House, including the Ministers, rise to their feet with repeated cries of « Hurrah for Italy ! »*)

## THE UNIVERSITY AND THE WAR.

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*Paris, at the Sorbonne, Dec. 3rd, 1917*

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The winning cordiality of your welcome, my learned friends, touches me, but does not surprise me. It has been truly said that the University is to us as a mother; and it is but natural that, I, in a spiritual sense University born and bred, should find myself among you as among brethren, while, however, not feeling less for this the sense of reverent respect this place inspires, whence so great a light of wisdom and the humanities has irradiated the world.

Lively but fleeting still, must be all such remembrances.

At this hour our tortured soul can live in nothing that is not the war, the war only, the war ever. Science is dumb, save so far as she has mobilized herself in the defence of the Fatherland and of the universal Right of the Peoples. Medicine has given masters and scholars to the ambulances and the field-hospitals; engineering has given them to the army and to the making of what that army needs; the purer sciences to the research after those devices of offence and defence, owing to which never war more monstrous was waged from deep down in the abysses of the sea to the pure heights of heaven. The Faculty of Law seemed to be less fortunate than the rest in this splendid contribution the University has made

to the war. The many graduates who went forth every year from our lecture-halls seemed sometimes — (and not merely in the sneers of the vulgar) — but the sophists and rhetoricians of our age, thirsting for the conquest of life by the mere daring of sounding words. Well, these lawyer-bands have hurried to the trenches, have given their Fatherland not their word and their intellect only but their blood and their life; they have been the very nerve and sinew of that wonderful improvised body of officers, now in command of companies and battalions, inferior not a whit to the officers by profession in technical ability or in heroism of self-sacrifice. And the very masters of our craft have been their exemplars; and among us Italians he who held the chair of Irnerius, one of the greatest jurists of contemporary Italy, Giacomo Venezian, fell facing the foe struck by a ball in his heroic breast. To others of our members, again, the lot has fallen to rule the State with merit theirs incomparably inferior, but with no less spirit of absolute devotion to the Fatherland and to that great cause common to us all.

Most assuredly, if the war, the sole idea now dominating us, could permit us to recover for a brief season the mental habitudes once dear to us, our observation would show us much, and much perhaps of importance, that would reveal to us the profound travail of human society and political institutions under the formidable pressure of the gigantic strife.

### The new Public Right.

For instance, the very reason that has now led me to Paris, — Paris the heroic heart of this great heroic France, — does it not contain the germs of a marvellous progress of public Right? Sovereign States are striving by way of liberty to attain to that union of will and force which our enemy has attain-



ed to by way of enforced dominion; — the dominion of a military caste over the German people, the dominion of the German State over those other States which, though perhaps not yet quite its vassals, are certainly no longer its peers.

Our wish, on the other hand, is to apply to free States that law of rational subjection to a higher rule of recognised general utility, which already works so admirably in harmony with the idea of individual liberty. I must not now trespass on your time in discussing what may be the immediate consequences and what the remote effects of this first attempt at an international co-ordination. But this I can say, and with heartfelt satisfaction, that the results so far obtained are excellent, and that the lofty sense of responsibility felt by every Government, linked with the most perfect mutual confidence, has rendered unanimity of will and of decision very much easier than is the securing a majority in a parliamentary assembly.

But this is not the only reflection that will occur to us as students of public law. Herr Kühlmann told us, the day before yesterday, that the war has finally convinced the German people that it is imperative to recognize «the modifications which have become historically necessary in a sense always tending to be more liberal»; — (the allusion is clear, — to an evolution tending to democratic guarantees and a parliamentary constitution); — while, to quote Herr Kühlmann once more, the countries that «delight in posing as the champions of popular liberty throughout the world, are following a process of evolution in a contrary sense», tending, that is to say, towards the military dictatorship of Generalissimo, Lloyd George and Field-Marshal Clemenceau.

As to me, my very name proclaims my martial destiny. Well, well: — the devil, as we say in Italy, has turned hermit, and the hermit devil. This ponderous German joke, which aims at humiliating us in

our character of citizens who thought themselves free, is a comfort to us as professors of public law. We well remember the attitude, now of derision, now of compassion, with which the «Herrn Professoren» of the «Deutschen Staatsrecht» passed judgment on our free institutions as proofs of the undisciplined and anarchic spirit of the Latin peoples, and contrasted with all this the solid structure of the Germanic State founded on the will of the Prince, before which all wills and all individual interests must bow.

### The Victory of the Right.

But let us put aside now all such reflections. What we have to do now is to combat in our war, to strive for victory with all the might of our souls and of our energies. Everything depends on that victory, — even, nay more than all, the very existence of Law and Right. The victory of the Germans would mean that conventions may be broken with impunity whenever it suits people to break them; that necessity — (and he whose interest it is has only to proclaim it) — frees from all law; that the measure of right is simply the power to enforce it with fire and sword; — in short, after this manner a whole new «corpus juris» would be constituted, whose best commentators could be recruited nowhere save... in the convict-prison.

But to this conception, which consecrates the right of force, we oppose one far other. It is a conception, this of ours, that while it has its roots deep down in our immortal Latin genius, has grafted itself upon the liberties which the English people has proudly guarded age after age, and which, transplanted to the fertile soil of America, have found new and marvellous developments and in these later days a still larger significance and greater force by reason of the

inspiring words of an eminent member of our profession, whose merited honour it is to be the leader of a great and mighty people.

Yes, dear friends, illustrious fellow-workers, when our just victory has been won and lasting peace has finally been secured for the human race now sore in travail, we shall celebrate then the «Festival of Right». And, that festival will be to us the highest and most longed-for reward of all the sacrifices we have endured, all the sorrows we have suffered, all the tears we have shed; and at that solemn hour the beloved never-to-be-forgotten Youth of all who offered up for their country the bright flower of their existence will seem to live again to bear their message to us; — «Fathers ours: let this be your solace, your glory: that not in vain we died!»

## THE ENEMY STAYED ON THE PIAVE

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies, Dec. 12th, 1917*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council. — Our military situation, of which, when I addressed the house on the 14th of last month, I explained all the menacing gravity, has this month wonderfully improved; and if it still remains grave, the comparison with what it then was suffices to show what a formidable crisis we have passed through. This is not the time or the place to enter into details of a military character: but one may well affirm that to have held the line of the Piave, spite such an extraordinary combination of adverse circumstances, constitutes a fact the military and moral value of which it is impossible to overestimate. (*Hear hear!*). And our heart swells and burns within us when we reflect that the merit and honour of this is to our sons, — to the soldiers of Italy. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*) Everything was against them, everything in the circumstances around them, in the task before them, — their physical tiredness after their most difficult retreat, the overwhelming superiority in numbers of an enemy flushed with victory, the crushing superiority of his artillery, the hurried preparation of our defences, even the season exceptionally favourable to the success of the invader: — but all these obstacles our soldiers have vigorously faced and overcome.

To those brave men who, from the tableland of Asiago to the mouths of the Piave, make their breasts the shield of the Fatherland, veterans in this terrible war or young recruits of the latest levy who at the risk of their lives have stood forth in defence of the soil and the honour of Italy, — and to the valiant sailors too, who only yesterday with heroic daring defied and smote the enemy, even under the shelter of his most formidable and most insidious defences (*Cheers*), — to each and all of them let the proud and grateful homage of their Country be given, in its most solemn form, here in the presence of the representatives of the Nation. (*Loud and prolonged applause. Ministers and the whole House rise and cheer again and again, their cheers being taken up by the occupants of the various galleries.*)

And with the same fervent faith we proclaim once more to-day our gratitude to the glorious soldiers of France and of England, who, now in immediate contact with the enemy, have by the closest brotherhood in arms cemented the union of heart and intent of the three great allied Nations. (*Loud and prolonged applause. Ministers and the whole House rise to their feet with cheers bursting out afresh and taken up as before by the occupants of the galleries.*)

This spirit of heroism in our soldiers, which has been met by the no less proud bearing of the whole people, would suffice, even in the gravest of defeats, to uphold the honour of an army and of a nation; so much the more then, it renews and embitters our sorrow for the unmerited disaster we have had to endure.

The Government was of opinion — (and still is so) — that under the pressure of this terrible menace, its sole duty was to face it, concentrating upon it all its thoughts and all its energies, and that the investigation into the causes of the late unfortunate events should not be permitted to become the occasion for recriminations or for delays, at all events in so

far as the one or the other might result in rendering less energetic the work of reparation.

But this did not mean and does not mean that the Government does not realize that among its first duties to Parliament and to the Country is also this: — to establish, as far as is possible, in all calmness and impartiality, the certain truth as to the facts of the case and the causes of those facts. (*Cheers.*) No doubt, there are difficulties here, and no light ones, even if only the material causes are to be taken into consideration; but the Government is resolute in its determination that these difficulties shall be overcome, and meanwhile it places itself at the disposition of Parliament for all the information it is possible to give on this head, on the basis of the facts ascertained up to the present moment, even if these cannot be held exhaustive and definitive.

At this hour, Gentlemen, the whole life of the Country is entirely swayed and regulated by the course of the war; and this is true, above all, of its economic life. Even before war broke out, Italy had to import almost all her raw material and a considerable part of her food-supplies; and now, while these needs of hers have been multiplied to an extraordinary extent, the difficulties in supplying them have increased too, but in much greater proportion. The diminution in tonnage, the risks of navigation, the lack of hands to labour, the increase in demand and the decrease of supply, the higher rate of exchange and the depressed state of the money market, all this, to say nothing of other causes that might be mentioned, has produced a general rise of prices, which renders the conditions of life more difficult not only in Italy and in all the other belligerent Countries, but also in those States which have been able to maintain their neutrality, and which from this point of view are no better off than we are. And yet the enormous rise in prices is not the worst danger, which is rather to be found in the menace that there may come to

be an absolute want of the prime articles of consumption, spite all that may be done to limit that consumption most rigorously.

This state of things — it is well to remember, — if indeed it is due to the war, will not and cannot by any possibility be changed at once by the mere fact that peace is made. The sole remedy for it consists in striving with all our might to secure that home production shall increase as much as possible or at least shall not diminish, and that consumption shall diminish or at least shall not increase. To these essential ends what is necessary is a firmer and more resolute organisation of the various departments of the State and a better discipline on the part of the individual citizen. Whether the war cease or go on, the problem remains still the same.

The Minister of the Treasury is just about to make his financial statement, but I am glad to be able to tell you at once that our finances have given evidence of a wonderful elasticity, bearing up against the shock of our reverses with a firmness that is another magnificent proof of the fine qualities of the Italian people. Grave on the other hand is the situation as regards the exchange, the high rate of which is a sign things are going badly and a new reason why they should go badly. We must demand from abroad as little as we possibly can, and try to export abroad all that is not absolutely necessary to us here at home. Austerity of life and the virtue of renunciation are the imperative duty of every citizen.

And meanwhile, as to the action of the State in this matter, the Government is of opinion that here too there is need of a greater and better co-ordination both in the means adopted and the methods of their working: it has therefore taken various measures and will soon have to take others, all of which will in due course be laid before the House.

In every sense, then, new sacrifices and new renunciations lie before us; but however serious they

may prove to be, no one needs any prompting to feel that our first duty is to see that all our resources are dedicated to the service of those who are fighting for us and suffering all that is hardest and sorest, offering up for their Fatherland their youth, their very life. (*Cheers.*)

### The policy of insurance to the combatants.

The Government has decided that to the family of every soldier in the field shall be sent on New Year's Day, as a sort of New Year greeting, two policies of the National Institute of Insurance, creating in favour of the soldier and his kin an insurance to the amount, according to circumstances, of 500 or 1000 francs. If we have further established that the policy may be negotiated at the close of the war by all who invest the sum granted them in the purchase of land or of the means of production, this is not only an act of gratitude on the part of the Country towards its brave soldiers; it is also a pledge of that policy of fruitful labour and social renovation, which with all our energies we ought to aim at.

As to the state of our industries, we can contemplate it with satisfaction. If some among them, those, for instance, that ministered to luxury or to the needs of foreign travellers, or that required for their activity raw material costly or difficult of transport, are suffering from grave depression, others, on the contrary, are in continual development: — and, more than this, the war has given rise to a number of new industrial enterprises, in which work is going on with feverish activity, and which show every sign of more and more vigorous development in the future. Of course, it is important to take timely measures to safeguard the country in regard to all that, so far as we can now judge, gives a fictitious and artificial tone to this development, as being bound up with



what is so transitory as a state of war; and the Government is of opinion, that for this reason and for others too, it must now resolutely face the complex and vital problem of the after-war period.

Other measures are in preparation too, which we hope will very effectively act as a stimulus to agricultural production, regard being had both to the needs of the war and to the period that will follow it. The Government is convinced that to heal the deep wounds inflicted by the war, every nation will have to increase its production: now if industrial over-production has for its limit the menace of an equal over-production in competition with it, agricultural over-production is sure to be for a long time to come free from all danger of suffering from any such superabundance. Therefore it is that we ought to hedge round with most loving care this our old land of Italy, which may be still made infinitely more fertile than it now is, if only the aid is lent it of a wise legislation and an extensive use of those means by which chemical and mechanical science have so wonderfully transformed modern agriculture.

### **The independence of Poland.**

Turning now, Gentlemen, to international affairs, it is well known to all that the fate of Poland forms the subject of discussions between the Governments of Germany and of Austria-Hungary, and public opinion in these two countries is much excited and very far from unanimous. But instead of upholding the imprescriptible rights of the noble and unhappy Polish Nation, these Governments are engrossed rather with schemes for using it as the means for political combinations and reciprocal compensations. And the natural consequence has been that the great Powers of our Alliance, inspired as they are by the fundamental principle of respect for nationality, have come unanimously to the following decision, — name-

ly, that the creation of a Poland independent and indivisible, under conditions such as to ensure its free development both political and economical, is one of the essential factors of a just and enduring peace and of the rule of right in Europe. (*Cheers. Comments from the Extreme Left.*)

### The liberation of Jerusalem.

Yesterday we heard with joy and emotion of the liberation of Jerusalem, owing to the valour of the English army, aided by French and Italian contingents. This military event recalls to our mind venerable traditions and glorious memories, which have been inspiration, substance and aliment to the history and civilisation of the great Christian Nations (*Cheers*); and while these recollections revive within us, the event has for us something of the significance of a presage.

In it we see not only the freeing of a city and of a people, but also the promise of the freeing of the world from an abiding incubus of oppression and of violence that has brooded for long centuries over the very spot whence was spread over all the Earth and over all its peoples the great Word, mild at once and o'ermastering, that would have all men brethren in an ideal of Justice and of Love. (*Cheers. Comments from the Extreme Left.*)

### Russia.

But cold comfort, on the other hand, can be ours from the recent events in the Russian Revolution. If a faction has made itself master of the Government at Petrograd, still Russia is at present without any body really representative of it, nay without anything like a normal political constitution; and we allies remain in an attitude of expectancy, awaiting the

hour when we can recognize as legitimate the Government that, being a true and enduring expression of the popular will, shall have the right to speak in the name of the Russian Nation.

Meanwhile it is not to be denied that the collapse of Russia has from the military point of view had very serious consequences, from which up to now Italy has been the chief sufferer. Nor it is possible to make light of the loss the cause of the *Entente* has sustained owing to the shifting in the respective proportions of the forces that face one another in the field. But all this should not prevent us from calmly pointing out that similar vicissitudes, now on this side and now on that, have never been wanting during this gigantic war, and that they have never been decisive. The factors of victory, — both in men and in means, — remain ever on the side of the *Entente*: — the vital point is to make their power felt, by securing among the Allies that true fellowship and that full co-operation, through which forces come to be not only totalled up but multiplied.

### The Conference of the Allies.

From this point of view, recent events mark decisive steps. I had already in our sitting of the 14th of last month referred to the decisions made at our Conference at Rapallo to give greater unity of impulse and of will to the military action and to the political action of the Allies. The Supreme Council of war of the Allies is composed of the Prime Minister and one Minister besides for each of the Great Powers whose armies are fighting on the Western front. It meets at least once a month, assisted on technical matters by a permanent Military Committee composed of the representatives of the respective armies and possessing a consultative voice.

There was further constituted a second Committee

for Naval Affairs, which has for its task the co-ordination of the action of the fleets.

On the 29th of last month the Conference of the Allies met at Paris. The guiding principle of this important meeting was « common property in means and needs »; and to give its labours the stamp of practical efficiency, it subdivided itself into various sections, according to the matter to be dealt with, viz: finance, importation, transport, armaments, munitions and aviation, supplies and blockade,

Without entering into details as to the decisions arrived at, it is enough to indicate the questions dealt with at the Conference, to show that the whole conduct of the war was brought under examination. And I am glad to be able to say that the decisions of the Conference enable us to feel assured that the Allies working in common will use all their energies to secure that Italy shall not want for food, coal and the raw materials necessary for carrying on the war, though of course we shall still have here to combat the grave difficulties arising from positive deficiencies that an organisation, however perfect, can diminish perhaps but cannot possibly remove.

### The United States of America.

Another great event has taken place in the International World, in the declaration of war by the United States of America against Austria-Hungary. (*The members all spring to their feet. Loud and prolonged cheers, taken up also by the occupants of the galleries. Cries of « Hurrah for the United States ! »*) While thus is definitively exploded the obscure intrigue of our enemies to make us believe in a possibility of separating Austria from Germany, this fact is of special interest to us Italians, who feel ourselves in consequence more and more bound in fraternal union with the great American Republic (*Loud Cheers*). And if our hearts are still quivering with gratitude and admiration for the

splendid zeal with which the American Red Cross lent us its powerful aid in our recent disaster, we attach too the highest value to the help that will be given us against the common enemy by the prodigious activity and the exuberant and conscious energy so characteristic of the American people (*Cheers*). But this event has a vaster and more general import and takes to it an almost symbolical meaning, in that it confirms once more the worldwide character of this war and indicates in the most precise and definitive way the ideal at stake which the conflict has more and more come to mean the defence of, so that over and above the special interests of the several States that stand opposed to the Central Empires, we have here a struggle on a matter of life and death, of equal concern to all. Our enemies, after the collapse of Russia, for which they ought not to arrogate to themselves any glory, unless we are to let pass for such the refined and really perfect part in it that is theirs of corruption and of perfidy (*Loud cheers*), — our enemies, I say, have recovered all their innate arrogance and resumed that insolent and offensive tone which their modes of thought render natural to them. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

The Central Empires say they want peace, but they keep the conditions of it wrapt in a cloud so as to use them as a means for spreading the germs of suspicion among the Allies and of depression among their peoples, (*Loud cries of «Hear, hear!»*), while through this veil gleam appetites more or less insatiable, intentions more or less menacing, according as at any given moment fortune more or less favours them in the war (*Cheers*). The rest of the world has one sole programme, one sole aim, that never changes, that is at one and the same time a maximum and a minimum: this namely, — it will not be the pasture to these appetites nor the designated victim of these menaces. (*Cheers.*) It will have no patched-up peace, or, worse still, peace vain, delusive, if not positively dishonour-

able; rather it wills, nay, it wrestles hard to win, a peace that shall be definitive, that shall forbid for ever the renewal of the violence and the atrocities that have menaced Humanity with a return to barbarism, a peace that in the settlement of Europe on its new foundations shall assure to all its peoples, great or small, the lawful and natural conditions of their political, social and economic development, in the inviolable unity based on their consciousness of their nationality. (*Hear, hear!*). On this basis we are ready to make peace, as we always have been, longing to see the staying of the scourge that stains the world with blood, convinced any Government would be criminal that was minded to carry on the war a single day if it were no longer absolutely necessary to ensure those ends it was entered into to secure (*Hear, hear!*). But till then, Italy, well knowing that the people which at this hour deserted its post would in sealing its own dishonour seal its own doom, proclaims herself, still and ever, proud to combat for the Right, and preserves whole and unshaken her faith in the triumph of Liberty and of Justice, (*Loud and prolonged cheers, which are taken up by the occupants of the galleries.*)

## RESIST !

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies, Dec. 22nd, 1917*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council.

— The gravity of the hour forbids me to use this statement I am about to make as a vehicle for detailed exposition. Too many warning voices all around me bid me remember that the Government can and must busy itself solely with the grand essential lines of policy the hour imposes on us. And so I will say at once, by way of exordium, what usually on such occasions as this is said in the form of peroration.

We have been reminded over and over again of our responsibility in words and ways more or less generous, rising to a pitch of sublimity in the words of my honourable friend, Signor Girardini. (*Comments.*) The Government is fully conscious of this its responsibility: it felt it even more acutely on the day when it took office, under the terrible conditions we all so well remember. Yes ! It is of no wonted commonplaces such as justify ironical comment that I remind you, when I would have you think once more of what was my prayer then, — that I might be spared the responsibility of a power, which never more than at that hour seemed to me a cross. But then we heard within us but one sole voice, the voice of duty: we argued not, we accepted, and we faced the most perilous situation perhaps that Italy has ever traversed from the day it

became one. (*Comments*). We have taken energetic measures, such as we believed the hour demanded and the imminence of the danger suggested. As my honourable friend, Signor Nitti, said, we have lived through fifty days that to us have been as fifty years. And now we stand before the august sovereignty of Parliament: but all my respect for it shall not prevent my saying that if the responsibility is the Government's, from the two Houses we have the right to demand consistency. And I have good reason to remind the House of this, when in the course of the present long debate we have again and again heard arguments brought forward that by its solemn vote this House has already passed beyond and rendered vain. (*Cheers.*)

I interrupted an honourable member (Sig. Colajanni) just now, when he spoke of giving us his confidence *faute de mieux*, as a sort of second best; but perhaps my interruption was somewhat out of place. However responsibility comes, it must be met with equal mind; and besides, I can well understand that, in the complex political conscience of each of us, must have its weight, in the line of action each takes and in the votes he gives, a certain relative element. I myself have perhaps quite recently been influenced by some such sentiment. But if the question of capacity, the question whether we are more or less unequal to our task, — (and after all, it is this alone that is in question), — may determine a judgment of relative value, still there is one point on which your vote cannot and must not be of doubtful meaning. And that which from this hour you know and ought to know is this, — that you are about to give your vote to men who, it is true, can feel and do feel the passions of party, and are inspired with them up to a certain point more or less ardently according to their individual temperament; but that none the less they hold it to be their duty, at this hour, to subordinate all the passions of party to one sole passion, — the salvation of the Fatherland. (*Cheers.*)



## The Causes of the Disaster to our Arms.

Now let me be perfectly frank. There have been moments during this debate, when I have really doubted whether this feeling of mine was shared by the House. Yes, I have really doubted that. I should fail in frankness, if I did not say so. Take for example, — (I will not confine myself to quoting some mere detail, I will choose rather what is a burning question if ever there was one), — take the question of the causes of that terrible disaster of ours.

As to this, it was agreed among us, on the ground, the House must allow me to say, of parliamentary loyalty, that the discussion of it should be reserved for the Secret Sitting. (*Hear! hear!*).

Now let me tell the honourable member, (Sig. Turati), that the point is not, whether the document we were discussing there or the argument we were employing was of its nature or no a document or an argument to be discussed in Secret Session. This is not the point: — the point is, whether, to speak plainly, it is lawful for a Public Body to take a question it finds brought before it as an organic whole and to cut it into two parts, and then to discuss one of these parts in a sitting from which the public is excluded and the other in a sitting to which the public is admitted; — which of course means, to discuss the first part in a sitting where the Government, in obedience to the agreement sanctioned by Parliament, could offer and did offer its contribution to the debate, and to discuss the second part, on the other land, where the Government can no longer offer this contribution.

Sig. TURATI — It was never agreed that in the Secret Sitting we should confine ourselves to the discussion of this. (*Comments; murmurs.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — No, what was

agreed on was, that the military question should be discussed in Secret Session. Now I am bound to admit to myself and to say to the House that the limits imposed on us by the parliamentary agreement and in the very interests of the discussion have been transgressed, by this party and by that. This is the simple truth. (*Murmurs of assent and dissent*) The Government, then, cannot on this matter enter into details. We can only refer the House to the statements made by us during the Secret Session.

Still, on the following points, we repeat this our determination. The Government does not believe that it is yet in a position to pronounce judgment on the responsibility for what has happened, nor consequently to take the measures that the fixing of such responsibility would entail. Further, the Government assures the House that the inquiries will be continued, and that nothing shall arrest it in its determination to arrive at the truth.

But however grave this question may be, we must not forget that it is subordinate to another, which to the Government seems immeasurably more important; — and that is, the necessity of the defence of the country. (*Hear! hear!*) It is most dangerous that the inquiry into the causes of our military disaster should become a means of diverting our attention from that great end, which now is supreme, is fundamental, is such as to absorb every other. (*Cheers*). It is enough to affirm at once, as is our duty, after the long debate in this House, that if the disaster we have suffered is most serious, no *one* of the complex causes of it touches the honour of our army, which from its unmerited sacrifice emerges glorious as ever, no less than before bright and unstained. (*Loud and unanimous applause. The Ministers and the whole House rise to their feet with repeated cries of « Hurrah for the Army! »*)

## Our Brethren the Refugees.

This, as I have already said, is not the hour to spend time in the discussion of details. But in laying down for myself this principle, I must make one due exception, when with all the fullness of my heart I respond to the appeal addressed to us by him who in fraternal love is now striving to ameliorate the sad plight of our brethren, the refugees.

This distressing question was already touched on in this House on a former occasion: it has again been brought to our notice in this debate by my honourable friend, Signor Sandrini, and I can assure him that no otherwise than he the Government understands the obligations that the disaster has created towards those our brethren, who have suffered and suffer still such anguish and such material injury for a cause common to the whole Nation. (*Hear! hear!*) This, I repeat, is neither the place nor the time to enter into details. But it is my duty solemnly to affirm that the restoration of the districts that endured and endure invasion, constitutes a national duty. (*Cheers.*) This duty is based not merely on an elementary sentiment of the solidarity of our people, but no less on the most obvious utilitarian considerations. Those are lands in the highest state of culture: in those regions flourish rich and important industries: to restore to both of these the means of regaining their former efficiency signifies simply to reconstitute a most valuable part of the national patrimony. (*Hear! hear!*)

## Home Affairs and the Snares of the Enemy.

I pass now to internal affairs; and here the House will of course understand that I cannot follow my honourable friend, Signor Pirolini, into all the details of his act of indictment (*Comments*): while on the other hand I can and must reply to him as to that which

constitutes, so to speak, the kernel of his speech, in aid of which he has unrolled before us that army of proofs of his.

One general remark to begin with: I am grateful to any citizen who lends me his aid in this formidable battle against the snares of the enemy; and so I greatly esteem my honourable friend's contribution in that part of it which can be rendered effective.

I could prove to him, — (and I will endeavour to do so, if he will give me the opportunity of a personal interview with him to this end), — how, as to the greater part both of the information he has given us and the names he has mentioned, the Police Authorities have not been idle. If the results have been negative, the reasons for this are twofold. Either the persons in question did not deserve to be suspected; and in this case it would obviously not be fitting to mention their names in this House. (*Hear! hear!*) Or they were justly suspected and have been clever enough up to now to keep themselves on the right side of the law; so that, in their case too, but for very different reasons, it has not been advisable to publish their names. (*« Hear! hear! » and Comments.*) But, to return to the speech of my honourable friend, (Sig. Pirolini), there is another reason why I really must regret, not so much his criticisms *per se* as the general trend of them; — a reason which does not concern the Government but, what is far more important, the interests of the country in state of war, which thereby may suffer injury.

I allude to that tendency to generalize, which evidences itself less in the actual words used than in the general trend of them, through which, for instance, the hostile attitude, nay, the possible delicts, to be laid to the charge of individual citizens of neutral States, and of citizens of Switzerland in particular, are so brought before us as to lead the public to believe it has grounds for suspicion against all the citizens of those States, though they live in all honesty

and honour amongst us, respecting the duties of international hospitality. (*Cheers*) And to cause such an impression, may I be permitted to say, is not in accordance with those relations of good neighbours and cordial mutual loyalty, which the Italian Government and with it the Italian people have and mean to maintain with the Helvetic Republic. (*Loud cheers.*)

And a similar remark I feel bound to make too with regard to my honourable friend's allusions to the antipatriotic attitude of some who belong to the ecclesiastical hierarchy or who are militant members of the Catholic Party. Here, too, the faults and errors of individuals should not be allowed to excite utterly unfounded suspicions, which would be unjust and offensive to the supreme Spiritual Authority, nor to distress the consciences of citizens who know so admirably how to conciliate the sentiments of their Faith with their duty as Italians; and among these I would single out for special reference the clergy themselves, who from the highest to the lowest have given such shining proofs of loyalty and of love to the Fatherland. (*Cheers.*)

As to the principles the Government obeys in its home policy, allusions have been made that would give me the opening for an academic discussion; which at this hour, Heaven forbid! Two phrases of mine have been quoted: — happy the phrases that have no history! In the first, I said that to the safety and salvation of the State I was ready to sacrifice liberty itself: in the second I did penance for the first.

But between these two phrases there is no contradiction; and this it would be easy for me to prove, on the sole condition that the first be duly taken as an abstract hypothesis, the second as a concrete fact. If the abstract hypothesis were once more before me for decision, I should give the same answer; viz., that there is nothing higher than the necessity to provide for the safety and salvation of the Fatherland. (*Cheers.*)

An honourable member (Sig. Bentini) has urged

me to take the line which he calls reaction: adding that I should thus earn his gratitude and his friends'. Allow me to tell him that this is an additional reason why I shall not take it. (*Laughter.*) But the honourable gentleman has been still more precise, and at one point in his speech he said, appealing to me by name: — « Speak out! How do you mean to treat us? » Are we a party looked upon as outlawed, or are we a party still protected by those guarantees which are reconcilable with the needs of the defence of the State and with the crisis we are passing through? — Well, it is with no mere dialectic retort that I answer him: the words leap forth spontaneously and irrepressibly from my lips, the facts being as they are: — « It is *I* who say to *you*: Speak out! (*Laughter*) — « Explain, define your attitude to the war and to the needs the war brings with it! » (*Hear! hear!*) This, Signor Bentini, is a perfect mystery. If the time is come for speaking out, it is I who have the right to ask you: — what is in your mind?

Sig. TREVES — Abolish the censorship, then. (*Cries of « Oh, oh! »*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — What is in your mind? Here, in this House we hear speeches which, if — (for I would not be misunderstood) — if I cannot say they satisfy me, still give one the impression of a struggle within you between the ideology of the cenaculum on the one side and the living, burning sentiment of love of Country on the other, — speeches, in short, that may be considered harmless to the great cause of the Fatherland at war. But are these ideas of yours also the ideas of your party? Does your party in all this follow where you lead? And note that I am not asking you what may be the ideas of your Right or your Centre or your Left, as a parliamentary party? I ask simply: Does all your party follow where you lead, as that leading is here given us by such honourable members as Signor Turati,

Signor Treves, Signor Modigliani, and Signor Prampolini? I, for one, have good reason to doubt it.

The Home Secretary knows much that he cannot prove up to the hilt. To anticipate, then, your retort, the challenge to me to lay my proofs before the House, I confine myself to the suggestion of the thing as a mere possibility. Do you believe, I ask the honourable members I see before me, that there are not in your party, — (I do not mean in the insignificant rank and file, among those who hold no responsible position: for of these you might tell me that there are black sheep in every flock; — do you believe, I say, that there are not in your party people who hold responsible positions in it, who represent it, and who — (you see, you want me to speak out, and I am speaking out), — who assert that the cause of the rout at Caporetto was simply — the propaganda of the Socialist Party . . . . .

Sig. MODIGLIANI — Not a single one. (*Comments.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — . . . and who boast of this and blame you because your attitude in this House robs the Party of this just ground for pride?

Members of the Extreme Left — It is not true! (*Comments.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — It is not true? I am very glad indeed to hear it . . .

Sig. TREVES — Talk of a stream! There isn't even a dribble. (*Murmurs.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — And from this denial of yours I am entitled to draw the conclusion that those who professed ideas, sentiments and opinions so adverse to their Country and its salvation, cannot be regarded as members of a political party but as members of a gang of criminals. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

Sig. TURATI — Of course, they are spies of the police. (*Loud murmurs.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — And now I

come back to the speech of my honourable friend Signor Pirolini, to discuss the political thesis he laid down in that speech; and lengthy as was his analytical demonstration of it, still it may be expressed briefly enough in the form of a proposition he laboured to prove. And the proposition was this: — there is in this country an organisation acting under the direction of the enemy and whose work goes on here in our midst and aims at the political dissolution of the country. Now my honourable friend himself has admitted that I have, so to speak, a certain right of property to the proposition in question. And, as a matter of fact, I referred to it in the Secret Session. My honourable friend has told us that it is well to repeat it in the hearing of the Country. And most assuredly, repeat it so, we can and we ought.

The enemy had created a most formidable organisation of espionage. During the first period of the war it was most active in the form of injury to us in a military sense; and then, later on, it remained, so to speak, lurking stealthily in wait in the field of politics. In the phase which the war is now traversing, the enemy has unmasked all his batteries and means to press home in grand style this offensive of his, which aims at effecting the ruin of our country by a general infection of its organism, not only insinuating the fatal venom of treason, but disseminating no less the subtle germs of weak impatience and base cowardice. (*Hear! Hear!*)

This peril, which under a thousand obscure and insidious forms menaces us here in our midst, is not less grave, nay, I hold that it is even graver than that which at the front our glorious warriors have to contend with. (*Hear! Hear!*) I will go further: it is in very truth a mortal peril, for it strikes at the very root and essence of our existence, aiming as it does at the dissolution of the bonds that link our nation into one.



Signor Turati, it is this alone that can bring Italy to ruin. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

Well, to meet this danger, were needed a tireless activity, a calm and resolute decision, a constant energy, on the part of the Government. This duty I recognize, and I pledge myself to discharge it with no hesitation and with no weakness. (*Loud, general and prolonged applause.*)

, But at the same time I must make appeal to all parties, and remind them that they too have their responsibility.

Now, in our present position, — yes, you are right, my revered and dear friend Carcano, — we can and we ought still to speak of concord: but not in the sense this word has had up to now, as a thing we were content to take or leave as it came, as a boon to be desired, but only up to a certain point, to be won. Now, on the other hand, with the enemy across our border, not only assailed on the field of battle, but spied upon and plotted against in our cities, in our houses, in our very souls, we must away with those ideas of concord that were enough for us in old days, we must sacrifice all the abstractions of the schools and the prejudices of party, all the fetichisms and 'phobias about this and about that, — we must sacrifice them each and all on the altar of the Fatherland. (*Loud and prolonged applause from all parts of the House.*)

### Foreign policy and peace.

Coming now to the question of foreign policy: there is no such thing as the foreign policy of my right honourable friend, Baron Sonnino. I protest most emphatically: our foreign policy is the foreign policy of the whole Cabinet. And there is not a member of it who from the bottom of his heart does not feel on this point as I do: —

Sig. LABRIOLA — Since your Cabinet was formed.

The President of the Council — But those Ministers feel it, if possible, still more deeply, who supported that policy during the lengthy period when the Ministry was presided over by my right honourable friend, Signor Boselli. And I myself — What of my own case? — I, who for three years, have been a fellow-worker in that policy.

It has had the strange fate, this foreign policy, to turn upside-down, if I may be allowed the expression, the true state of things; so that a fallacious semblance has been taken for an inner reality. People talk of a policy that works uncontrolled, of a policy that shuts itself up in a cold and jealous reserve: but let me tell the members of this House that what makes a policy clear and limpid, what enables it to be understood, and so to be discussed, and so to be judged of, is most assuredly not the endless flow of words, is most assuredly not the facile imparting of confidences, is most assuredly not the gushing torrent of fine phrases, — features these, I readily admit, none of them specially characteristic of my right honourable colleague and friend, Baron Sonnino (*Laughter*): — no, it is a certain property all its own, a certain intimate congruity, by virtue of which, viewed in connection with the ends it has in prospect and the perfect loyalty of the means it uses to attain these ends, it naturally becomes understood, and reveals itself clear, limpid and straightforward. (*Loud cheers from all parts of the House.*)

I am far from wishing to say anything, even unintentionally, that might seem offensive to the honourable gentleman, (Signor Turati), charging him with anything like craft, still less, with a certain lack of full and perfect good faith. But unintentionally, he brings a charge against the foreign policy of the Government and of my right honourable friend, Baron Sonnino, which is essentially the opposite of that his actual words convey: — viz., not to find it accommodating enough instead of firm, not to find it tortuous

enough instead of straightforward. (*Loud Cheers: Interruption by Sig. Turati and Sig. Beltrami.*)

Peace has been spoken of. The honourable member, (Sig. Turati), has given us to understand, — (taking on him, thereby, the gravest responsibility, in making such an assertion), — that peace is not impossible, but that it cannot be had, because of some blind obstinacy, some prejudice, some preconception, on the part of my right honourable friend, Baron Sonnino. But what peace is the honourable member thinking of? When he makes a statement like this, we are face to face with what I should call culpable defeatism, which, like culpable homicide, does not, I admit, necessarily dishonour a gentleman, but no less for this has harmful, fatal effects. We have here, I say, culpable defeatism; for when this assertion comes to the ears of the soldiers, — that peace could be made, but is not made because some one or other has no will to make it, — their spirit of resistance is lowered thereby. (*Loud Cheers.*)

But what peace do you mean? Let us speak out plainly. The peace referred to yesterday by an honourable member (Sig. Morgari)? (*Comments.*)

That honourable member's speech deserved a better fate, and it is really a pity that it was delivered during a public sitting, because, owing to the influence it might have on public opinion, it excited some interruptions which I quite admit were fully justifiable; but still it was listened to with the greatest attention, because if any doubt could remain till then as to the charges and the criticisms made in this House, after that speech of his all such doubt was banished for ever. (*Laughter and cries of «Hear, Hear!»*)

Is the peace you speak of, the peace the Socialist Party intends to promote by means of its congresses?

Well here again, I do not mean to speak of intentions. Let us look at facts. To discuss intentions means to create personal questions, and it is the very reverse of my wish to stir up any such contentions.

I hold all in respect without exception; and this I say not as matter of form, but because it is really what I feel. Let us put intentions wholly aside then, and look merely at facts.

What has this international socialism that aims at peace really done? Its programme was one I disagree with *in toto*, of course; but before which I bow with all respect: — a noble line of action, a strong line of action, may excite if nothing else an æsthetic sentiment of respect and of admiration. Well, this was the programme of international socialism: — the slaughter must cease: if the Governments will not make it cease, the peoples must: if the peoples will not, then must the combatants.

A noble line of action, I repeat. And if you had succeeded in making the revolution break out simultaneously in Germany and in France, in Austria and in Italy (*Loud cries of «Hear Hear!»*), if the trenches had been abandoned simultaneously by the German and the Russians, the Austrians and the Italians, — then, I should have understood you (*Loud cheers*): I should have respected you: nay, I should have admired you: for, I repeat once again, the grand and noble excites admiration, even when we do not share the sentiment that inspires it. I should not only have understood Lenin, I should have admired him, if when he went to meet a German, he had gone to meet another Lenin from Germany (*Laughter*), — Liebknecht, say, or Haase: — but, instead of this the German he went to meet was . . . a German general. (*Loud cheers.*)

He went to meet a German general, one of those generals with one of those mighty «Von's» before their name: — and that general, — no, that general was certainly not the representative of the internationalism of your friends' German allies in doctrine. And when, (as you all know), the general aforesaid was asked by the Russian commissioners whether he would allow some of their party to visit the German trenches to propagate their doctrines, his answer was that, if they

did, he would have them shot. (*Laughter and comments.*)

Well, I confess: — here I admire and applaud the Prussian general. (*Hear hear!*)

Sig. MARCHESANO — It is for external application, — the German socialism.

The President of the Council — What other peace, then, do you mean? And don't let the honourable gentleman (Sig. Turati) say I am evading the question. I am facing and meeting all his objections. What other peace do you mean? Certainly not the Socialist peace: — for obviously that, as I have said, — and let no one take offence at my words, — is as truly of German creation as asphyxiating gas and submarines. (*Hear, hear! Bravo!*)

Well, what else is there? There are the rumours, the « They say's », the vague assertions, there is Bethmann Hollweg's speech of a year ago, and so on and so on, to the end of the chapter. But in all these proposals there is nothing positive, nothing definite. (*Hear, hear!*) An honourable member (Sig. Morgari), whom I thought it only fair to interrupt, because I wished to understand more precisely what his idea really was, — well, he answered that proposals are not made, because it is understood that what is aimed at is, to return to the *status quo*. (*Comments.*)

But, so far as I am aware, not even this has been said in any German proposal. There has been no single German proposal, in which Germany has declared herself ready to fulfil the very first duty of honesty, with its necessary consequence of reparation of damage done; — I mean, the restoration of Belgium. (*Cheers and cries of « Hear, hear! »*).

And as to us Italians, Count Czernin has told us too that he very advisedly refrains from saying he will give us back the provinces occupied, because he does not mean the Italians to be under the impression that they can go on with the game without loss to themselves.

Well, is this the *status quo* the honourable member

meant, the *status quo* he would be willing to accept?

Why, rather than accept even to discuss a *status quo* like that, Italy will stand at arms till they drive her back to Sicily! (*The Ministers and the whole House rise to their feet amid loud and prolonged cheers, repeatedly renewed.*)

The *status quo*! What! Forty millions of men have risen up in arms against one another, six or seven millions of lives have been cut short, thousands of millions have been spent and scattered to the winds, and you, the party that calls itself revolutionary, you can dream that all this has been done for nothing? Pardon me: — it was a mistake on your part. (*Loud Cheers.*)

Sig. MAZZONI — It's because we know the war can do nothing! («*Hear, hear*», *from the Extreme Left. Interruption. Loud Murmurs. Comments on the other benches.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — Well said my honourable friend, Signor Paratore: — this war is already in itself an immense revolution, which will open to the world a new path, either onward along the road that leads to the multiplication of the free individual energies, or back to the supremacy of one race over another. (*Comments.*)

In any case it will end in a revolution. It is stronger than we and than you: it is history in the making, it is God, it is Fate, it is the laws of evolution: it is that from which we cannot wrench ourselves loose. (*Lively comments and interruptions from the Extreme Left.*) And this is to me the only humorous feature about it, that it should be you, you the revolutionary party, who ostentatiously hold yourselves aloof from a true and great revolution. One could understand and justify such an attitude if it were I who feared it, — I who, though I profess myself liberal and democratic, have none the less in my opinions and in my convictions so many roots in the past: but how and why, I ask once more, can you fear it.

you who proclaim yourselves revolutionaries? (*Protests and murmurs from the Extreme Left. Interruption by Sig. Treves.*)

Gentlemen of the Lower House: — In the course of the present debate, several speakers, — and among them, Signor Alessio, — submitted the present situation of Italy to minute analysis both in the special aspects peculiar to itself and more generally as but part of that of all the peoples at war, and from both the military point of view and the economic: and it has been depicted by divers speakers, — by some in the darkest of colours, — as grave and difficult enough, and in a certain sense, positively dangerous. I have no objections whatever to make to such analyses: the Government busies itself with them, so Parliament has, of course, an equal right to do so. Still, if I were not speaking at so late an hour, I should like to point out the contrasts between the views of the two honourable members, (Sig. Morgari and Sig. Alessio). — because while the latter, as you all heard earlier in this debate, considers the situation so grave, the former, on the other hand, has brought us the comforting news, that Germany is beaten and admits that she is beaten. (*Comments from the Extreme Left.*)

The same remarks might be made about the speech of another honourable member, (Sig. Modigliani). But I will confine myself to saying that even the very longest premises ought still to result in a conclusion, and even the most careful analyses ought at last to conclude in a synthesis: or else we are left with the problems on our hands in endless meditation.

### Resist!

My friends, let us look the situation well in the face and sound it to its inmost depths; and then let us be brave and true as the hour demands.

In the opinion of the Government, whatever are the difficulties and perils of the situation, one only

path of salvation opens up before us, one only, with no possibility of choice, and that path is — *resist!* (*Loud cheere.*)

Is there any one in this House who knows of another? («*No! no!*»)

If any one there is, let him come forward (*Loud cheers*); let him lay his plan before us, and declare his readiness to take the responsibility of it.

Sig. DRAGO — Instead of distrusting other people.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — But, so far as I am aware, no one has up to now responded to this appeal, unless we are to make an exception in favour of the critical and negative attitude of the Socialist members of this House. (*Comments and murmurs from the Extreme Left.*)

But is not this exactly what you yourselves keep repeating? — «We confine ourselves to criticism: we have no intention to take any responsibility: we hold ourselves apart». Well, then, when I say it after you, what is your quarrel with me? (*Loud cheers. Murmurs from the Extreme Left.*)

Members with me of this House, — I tell you that analyses of a situation are absolutely worthless, even when they may justify the most pessimistic of conclusions, — if no other path is open to us save this alone, — *Resist!* (*Loud cheers Murmurs from the Extreme Left.*)

My friends, action saves and reasoning slays: — such reasoning as yours, Signor Modigliani. Why, this very hour of intense life we have lived through, proves to us of how little worth are the most sapient of reasonings, the most profound of investigations, the proudest of prophecies, when confronted with energetic and resolute action, able to go its road in lack of all things, even of hope itself. (*Hear, hear! and comments*). Will the House permit me one reminiscence. During those two weeks with which last October closed, those Passion Weeks of ours, of which no words will ever be able to tell all the anxiety and



all the anguish, the problem that most tortured us was this: — (the honourable member\* should not smile: it may not meet his approval, but I can assure him, this was the agonizing problem): — could we hold the line of the Piave? And when I say, hold it, — I mean, hold it for the brief space of time necessary to stem the tide of disorganisation and begin the task of reorganizing.

It was a question of life and death. Well, I took the opinion of several able experts in military matters during those days: and their analysis of the situation proved with despairing precision that the line could not give us even this minimum period of resistance. (*Comments.*) The state of our forces, the strategic situation, the menacing pressure of the enemy, the condition of the various supply services, everything, everything, looked at through the eyes of reason, led to the conclusion that resistance was not possible. — But our soldiers did not reason. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

They did not sit down and study the wars of Italy from Odoacer to Napoleon Bonaparte: — they fought, and the line was held.

This doubt of ours is now a thing of the past. Their courage triumphed over all the *a priori* demonstrations of the most convincing of pessimisms. (*Cheers & comments.*)

Human force has accomplished that which intellect held to be impossible.

Government and Parliament alike accept this superb lesson and realize its profound meaning and its imperious admonition: — *Resist!*

And with no other voice those our brothers speak to us, whom the dread tempest of war has torn away from the land of their birth; and all who from their mountains and their lakes hear the roar of the cannon every nearer: — *Resist!* And no other is the cry of

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\* Sig. Turati.

all those mothers who never more will see return to their homes the flower of youth was once their sons. If to the supreme sacrifice they have resigned themselves in the name of Italy, they still could not bear to know that noble blood had been shed all in vain.

The voice of the dead and the will of the living, the sense of honour and the cold plea of utility, all unite, then, to give us in all solemnity one sole admonition, to point us to one sole way of salvation: — *Resist! Resist! Resist!*

*(Loud and prolonged cheers from all parts of the House, many times renewed. Members crowd round the Front Bench to congratulate the Prime Minister, many embracing him. Cheers are given again and again for Italy and for the Army. The applause is renewed when Sig. Girardini\* advances to congratulate the President of the Council.)*

The President of the Chamber — President of the Council, in the name of Italy I salute you! *(Loud and prolonged cheers from all parts of the House).*

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\* Member for Udine, now in the occupation of the Austrians.

## AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF RUSSIA AND THE PEACE OF BREST-LITOVSK

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies, Feb. 12th, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council — The present Cabinet has already had occasion to express before both Houses of Parliament its fundamental conception of the war, winning thereto the unanimous support of all parties except those forced to oppose the war by preconceived theories. And in brief, our conception of it is this: — that persistence with inflexible firmness in the vast conflict is now no longer a matter of choice, but rather an inevitable necessity, forced upon us no less by the keen and conscious perception of the national ideals than by the profound and irresistible promptings of that instinct of self-preservation, whose power is as constraining to nations as to individuals. This way of looking at the special position of Italy has found a favourable and general reception in the examination of this and other questions which has taken place quite recently in the course of elaborate and fruitful discussions between representatives of the great Nations now in arms against the Central Empires: — and their conclusion has been identical with ours.

In fact, while at first sight it might seem that at Brest-Litovsk for the first time the question of peace was brought forward by means of positive and direct negotiations, the statesmen of the *Entente* had al-

ready, quite independently, given utterance to ideas and proposals as to the objects of the war and the means to bring it to an end; — and this not without certain differences of presentment, which, while they did not touch the essential unity of intent, owed their origin to the special factors introduced by varied circumstances and diverse surroundings and the general and special ends these statesmen had in view in the delivery of the speeches in question.

But this diversity of the points of view, from which statesmen of different nations, in situations, too, widely different, had considered the problem of the objects of the war, has had this beneficial effect: — that all the honourable possibilities of a just peace, viewed in all possible lights loyally conceivable, have been presented to the consideration of our enemies.

And among these proposals we have heard some so moderate and couched in such a spirit of large compromise, that certain of them were even calculated to jar upon the sentiment in us Italians of our just expectations, and to breed doubts, which, it is my pleasure to be able to state in the most positive and solemn manner, have been most cordially and completely dissipated. (*Loud cheers.*)

If, then, the wish for peace, so often ostentatiously proclaimed by our enemies' Governments, had really been prompted by sincere and loyal motives, it would have found the largest and most favourable basis to exhibit itself: but what has actually happened? Nothing has been exhibited but the most hopelessly obstinate adherence to a prearranged plan of imperialistic supremacy (*Loud cheerse.*)

In proof of this, most assuredly, we wanted nothing more than the striking lesson we derived from the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. Think what it means: a party comes into being which makes peace the essential article in its programme, and by the help of this programme gets into power, and then sacrifices everything to this programme, everything, above

all, the very means to carry on the war, — in other words, the efficiency of the army. Well, in spite of this, that party encounters such enormous pretensions on the part of the Central Empires, that it cannot by any possibility accept them, and can do absolutely nothing but simply surrender at discretion. (*Hear ! hear !*) A grave and sorrowful lesson, which still might be fertile of good if it could awake at last those who in all countries are in good faith lulled in illusion, and prove to them that, in a war like the present, to proclaim peace at any price cannot possibly lead to anything else but a peace so dishonourable as to be absolutely intolerable even to those who have not shown themselves disposed to shrink from even the very worst extremities (*Cheers and cries of «Hear, hear» !*); and if it could make people realise too, that the pretension to sever individuals or classes of society from the sacred unity of the Fatherland in state of war, does not mean only to betray the old ideals one renounces, but to betray no less the new ideals one adores. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

### To win peace: persistence in the war.

Further, in the last conferences held by the Allies, the latest declarations of both the German Chancellor and the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs were submitted to the most careful examination. There is, it is true, a certain difference between them of tint and tone; but taken as a whole, and apart from their form, in the one case rigidly concise, in the other equivocally evasive, in their substance they have this effective purport: — to maintain in their integrity all their own pretensions and to reject in their integrity all the just demands of others, or — to put it more briefly, — to ask for everything and to give way in nothing. The Governments opposed to us, then, when they consider the questions bearing on peace, practically leave no other course

open to the powers of the *Entente* but to submit to the peace they are pleased to impose on them. Well, after this, it seemed to us, as of course it is, otiose, nay positively dangerous, to spend time discussing mere abstract possibilities, while the very attitude of the enemy warus us that the only way to secure true peace is to go on with all our might in the war. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

Besides, as regards Italy in particular, those same reasons of absolute right and necessity, which are affirmed in the objects of our war, are as valid now as when they were proclaimed by the solemn act, by which, and after the fullest deliberation, we stepped down into the arena of the gigantic strife.

### Our aims are unchanged.

Now as then, Italy asks no more but can ask no less than this: — the completion of her national unity and the security of her frontiers by land and sea. (*The whole House rises. Loud, general and prolonged applause.*)

The two ends are as justifiable as they are strictly complementary. Only by the full attainment of both can Italy assure her existence as a State, truly free and independent. If on this head any doubt could be possible before the war, the tragic experience we have had must now have cancelled it for ever. The enormous military and naval difficulties we have had to face, culminating in the great overthrow it has been our lot to bear, prove but too well what a mockery is the independence of a people, that has the stranger within its gates. (*Hear, hear!*)

Why even in days past, when there was nothing to bias their judgment, writers — and not military writers only, — when they examined our frontier from the point of view of a possible war with Austria, judged it to be such as to compel us to abandon to the enemy, without striking a blow, some of the most

glorious and flourishing regions of Italy. And many years ago, there were even those who, admitting as a most fortunate hypothesis that the Italian army might be able to advance to the Isonzo, pointed out with surprising precision what a formidable menace would continually impend over our military action, constrained as it would be to develop itself on a plain dominated by mountains and turned by passes, still in the hands of the enemy. How facts have since abundantly justified these forebodings, it is, of course, quite unnecessary for me to remind you. (*Comments.*)

And with no less bitterness have we to confess that no less perilous are our frontiers by sea. Although Italy alone had already a certain though but slight superiority of naval force over Austria-Hungary, and although she is now the ally of powers whose superiority on the seas is so overwhelming that no vessel sailing under the enemy's colours dares furrow any sea in the whole world, still, spite of this, we have had to bear the pain of seeing our cities along the shores of the Adriatic made all defenceless the target for the rage of destruction of the enemy's squadrons.

Sig. BELTRAMI — That was not Lazzari's fault. (*Protests. Disorder.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — This state of things is grave enough already; but one shrinks from reflecting what it might become if *that* happened in the war on land... which Heaven forbid!

Sacred, then, if ever any were, is the object of our war: in it lurks the fatal dilemma of Italy, — to be or not to be. And this is why nothing can give us more pain than the suspicion, as unjust to us as it is harmful to us and to others, that we have made this war, not only for reasons absolutely vital to our existence, but from a thirst for imperialistic sway and the oppression of other races. (*Comments.*)

## The oppressed Nationalities.

Not so; — and I here proclaim it before the Parliament of Italy; — no one in the world can view with greater sympathy than is ours the aspirations of the various nationalities that groan beneath the oppression of races that lord it over them. (*Loud cheers: murmurs from the Extreme Left.*) And if their cause wins large consent and awakens well deserved interest in every civilised State that is also free, it finds in Italy, from our historic fellowship of sorrows and of hopes, hearts no less warm and one with theirs, — in Italy, where the sentiments of abstract and impartial justice find themselves linked in close union with the remembrance ever burning within us of what we suffered, what our brethren still are suffering. (*Loud cries of « Hear! hear! »*).

And most assuredly no one can assert that we confine ourselves simply to following with verbal sympathy and platonic admiration the efforts of the oppressed nationalities in their aspirations after liberty, when for wellnigh three years, with unheard of sacrifices and with the blood of thousands upon thousands of our brethren, we have been carrying on a war which, if it was decided on, if it is being waged, in defence of the rights of our race and of our very existence, is yet ever a war against a common enemy (*Hear! hear!*). And it is our common, nay perhaps our vital interest, that the inexplicable and most unfortunate misunderstanding should be cleared away, which has grown up as to the objects of our war. We have here once more today for our own selves and for all the world clearly and loyally affirmed them, in the spirit that intimately and essentially inspires them, as being exclusively directed towards the assurance of the national integrity and defence against the agelong and implacable menace of a hostile Power. (*Loud cries of « Hear, hear! »*)



## The co-ordination of the forces of the Entente

Gentlemen of the Chamber of Deputies: — Leaving to the Governments of our enemies, in the presence of history and of their own peoples, the responsibility for the continuation of the war, just as is theirs no less the responsibility for the unchaining of its horrors, the Supreme Council of the Allies, weighing all the circumstances of the case, could have but this one supreme duty: — to devote all its energies to the prosecution and the intensification of the war. And this duty it believes that it has discharged.

Its first and most pressing task was thoroughly to review the military situation as modified by the absolute and complete collapse of Russia. And here it must be clearly understood that the *Entente* cannot for the present regard the events that are taking place, in North Eastern Europe as more than *de facto* conditions of things, utterly lacking in any element of right and every basis of legitimacy, till the hour when the rise, it may be, of new States and the determination of their frontiers and of the terms of their effective independence have been recognized and sanctioned by an international compact. But simply as facts to be dealt with, the Council at Versailles had already before given its most careful attention to the events that have taken place there in the East, and it holds that the simplest dictates of prudence warn us to reason on the least favourable hypothesis, — in other words to take as an axiom that the Western Front has now nought but itself to rely on and must prepare itself to sustain alone the whole burden of the war.

Well then, the military situation was on this basis subjected to a minute and complete analysis, with the aid of eminent experts and even of some of the present leaders of the armies in the field.

You will, of course, easily understand, gentlemen

that this is not a matter on which I can enter into details. But with all the sense of responsibility which I know is mine when I speak before Parliament on such high argument, I declare to you that the result of this examination into the military situation of the *Entente* was such as to justify the fullest confidence that human foresight can be permitted to indulge (*Hear! hear!*): — while, on the other hand, we can and must believe that, good as our present situation now is, it must needs go on continually and sensibly improving, were this only for the now daily and constant increase in the wondrous contribution of military force by the great American Republic. (*Loud cheers.*)

And when one considers that we are entitled to have this confidence, even after the complete loss to us of the enormous military force Russia lent to the coalition, one cannot without some regret reflect how great was the waste of energy in the days when the *Entente* had over the Central Empires a numerical superiority so decided. (*Comments.*) No doubt, many causes concurred to this end: but this one above all, the lack of an adequate co-ordination in the use made of those vast resources. The hard experience has not been in vain; and the compacts of Versailles have most happily succeeded in reconciling the need of an intimate union of all the forces at our disposal on the Western Front, now in the truest sense one, with that liberty and that responsibility, which it were well to leave unimpaired with the commanders of each single section of it. But these very measures of comparative independence were suggested by reasons of general utility, not of national *amour propre*; which, more than base, would have been positively criminal, had they impaired the efficiency of the common effort at this hour decisive of the fate of the world.

And by a like sentiment of cordial solidarity the Allies were guided in dealing with the questions relating to the food-supplies. The profound disturbance of the world's economic relations owing to the gigantic

phenomena presented by a war that has no precedent, has brought into being for all of us the most arduous difficulties and imposes upon all the hardest of sacrifices: — still, no less in London than in Paris and in Washington it was recognized that Italy, as regards certain absolutely essential commodities, had the gravest lack to suffer. As to grain, it was arranged to meet this lack by supplies deducted by the Allies from the quantity assigned to themselves; action this which we know how to appreciate as it merits, fully sensible of the fraternal solidarity it bears witness to. (*Hear, hear! and cheers.*) And we trust that an equally satisfactory arrangement is to follow for other food-supplies of no less importance, in regard to which negotiations are still in progress.

Assuredly, in no case would it be right to say that every difficulty has been overcome and that we have not to face grave and pressing difficulties amid obstacles never-ending: still, though we bear always before our eyes and in our hearts the consciousness of all the sacrifices duty demands from us, we believe we can now look the future firmly in the face, however harsh and grievous it may prove to be, trusting alike to the proved loyalty of our allies and to the tempered resistance of our own people. (*Cheers.*)

### The heroism of the people.

My friends I cannot without emotion refer to the admirable resistance this our people opposes alike to threats and to snares, supporting with resigned dignity every privation and every sacrifice, and while in its great and generous heart it finds still the fire of enthusiasm of the earliest days of the strife, taking on it ever more and more a demeanour calmer and more austere, such as is demanded by the hour it is fated us to traverse. (*Loud applause.*)

And so, notwithstanding the invasion of two provinces that to earlier loans had largely contributed,

and notwithstanding the special state of economic distress from which are suffering the districts bordering on the front where the battle is raging, the new loan has so far yielded more than three and a half milliards of francs, and a fortnight is yet to run before the subscription to it is closed: so that we may hope, — nay, it is exceedingly probable, — that the results will exceed all expectation and will represent at least double the sum obtained by any previous loan. (*Loud cheers.*)

And thus the people of Italy, in the hour alike the hardest and the most decisive of the war, reaffirms its faith in the great cause even more firmly than when its armies were fighting beyond its frontier.

And with no less fervour has this new appeal by our Country been heard and welcomed by her sons who are far away from her: indeed, our fellow-countrymen in foreign lands have shown themselves willing to contribute even more largely this last time than in any preceding loan. To them, to these our brethren scattered over all the world. I address no single word to rouse and stimulate them, because I know well they need it not. Now as never before love for the great common Fatherland will assuredly glow in their hearts; they cannot but have share in our anxieties and in our hopes, they cannot but live the life that is now ours, a life made up of hard toils and generous sacrifices. Full sure, then, am I, that, to their Fatherland they will do, and do in all fullness, their duty (*Hear, hear!*).

As to our financial position in general, its stability has surprised even the most doubtful and hesitating: the increase in the revenue shows no signs whatever of decline, notwithstanding the greatness of our sacrifices and the growth of our taxation. And thus, in this hardest of wars, of which it never seems possible fully to meet the needs, not only as regards the quantity and the quality of the soldiery, but also as to material of every description, our people has

known how to show the world that it is discouraged by nothing and prepared for everything, provided only the supreme ends, for which it is fighting side by side with the other free peoples, have their recognition and their inviolable sanction.

This faith, spite all, will not be vain. At the very moment when our labours at Versailles were most intense, came the news of the fortunate action of our army on the tortured tableland of Asiago, where through all the changes and chances of the war, has ever shone forth the valour of our soldiery. Need I say with what joy, with what emotion, we welcomed the glad news, which seemed to bear with it both a witness and a presage.

This witness ; — that the army of Italy, which after the terrible disaster it so unjustly had to suffer, had so heroically acquitted itself of the task of the defence of our territory, had found again its ardour in the attack, with all its old valour and with new hopes. (*Loud cheers.*)

And this presage: — that wherever and however the foe may bring to bear his last supreme effort, whose desperate and dread menace it would be the height of imprudence not to foresee, he will find before him the brave, staunch hearts of soldiers, who know full well that now it verily behoves them to conquer for the salvation of the Fatherland and for the fate of the World. (*All the members rise to their feet, including the Ministers. Loud and general cheering, which breaks out again and again. Repeated cries of « Hurrah for Italy ». Members throng round the President of the Council to offer him their congratulations.*)

# MONTE GRAPPA.

## THOU ART MY FATHERLAND!

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies, Feb. 23rd, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council — The House will of course, understand that, at so momentous an hour, I shall not enter into matters of detail, however important they may be. I will only say generally and comprehensively as regards all the suggestions and observations to which the attention of the Government has been called and to which a definite answer has not been given by one or other of my colleagues, that these observations and suggestions shall receive our most careful attention.

And in saying this, I wish to be understood as referring specially to my honourable friends, Signor Rampoldi and Signor Cesare Nava, and the measures to be taken in preparation for the after-war period, measures that are now as a matter of fact being taken.

As to the question of food-supplies, it is, of course, of the very highest importance: but I had already assured the House, when the communications of the Government were laid before it, that as to the supplies of grain, we are in a position to provide for the needs of the Country to the full extent contemplated in the regulations for the month of March. (*Murmurs. Interruption.*)

These regulations are made in each case for a month only: — at a time like the present, nothing more permanent can be attempted. And I take this

opportunity of expressing once more our thanks to our Allies, who, as it is no longer possible to increase the quantity the world can spare for us and them, have recognized the greater need of Italy, and agreed that the quantity shall be diminished which had already been assigned to them. (*Cheers.*)

And as in the Government communications to which I have just referred I explained that with regard to the supplies of the other articles of first necessity negotiations were still going on, and that to this end my right honourable friend and ablest of fellow-labourers, Signor Crespi, was still at work in London and Paris, — I am glad to be able to assure the House that, as to coal, we have now arrived at an agreement which extends to all the details necessary for its complete execution, and assures to Italy that minimum of coal which is absolutely indispensable to us. (*Hear, hear!*)

Well, this being premised, I pass on to the questions discussed in this debate to which my colleagues have not given a reply, — those, I mean, which are of general importance and therefore have their bearing on the policy of the Government in its entirety.

### **The Caporetto Commission.**

There has been reference again in this debate to the Commission of Inquiry into the unfortunate events of the end of last October. Now I had already, so to speak, replied by anticipation to what was said here during the last sitting of the House; and the House then made clear that it welcomed and approved the views I held and the line I proposed to take in this matter. So I have only to refer the House to what I said on that occasion.

A Parliamentary Commission is not possible at the present moment, and for this conclusive reason: — it is not possible to have any body of men enquiring into what goes on in the army fighting at the front, independently of the General Staff of that

army, and therefore probably in antagonism with it. This is not a thing to be demonstrated: one feels the truth of it or one does not: if there is any one here who cannot understand that discipline imperatively demands that no power shall exist capable of limiting the power of the General Staff, well, I have no means at my command, no arguments, to convince him. (*« Hear, hear! » and various comments.*) The Commission of Inquiry was, however, constituted on the broadest lines, on a basis exhibiting a respect for the dignity of Parliament which I am far from terming excessive, but which certainly was of the highest; for of the seven members composing it, three represent what I may term the technical military element and four the parliamentary, two senators and two members of this House. It is not correct, then, it is not just, to say that there has been a want of respect for the dignity of the House.

The composition of the Commission, then, is such that even those who have criticised the action of the Government in the matter have never said a single word — (and how could they?) — that did not express the fullest recognition of the ability, the independence and the high character of the commissioners who have been chosen to serve on it.

So that it is not too much to say, that, even if one were willing to entertain the idea of a purely parliamentary basis for the Commission of Inquiry, other members for it might be found of equal merit, but certainly none superior to those that have actually been chosen, whether as regards perfect integrity or independence of character.

And now I must reply to the honourable member, (Sig. Colajanni) who has dragged out the Biagini report, to base upon it a suggestion of falsification.

I absolutely repudiate this suggestion, — (which the honourable member also — and I thank him for it, — rejected so far as I was personally concerned), — but I repudiate it for all.



Can it possible be imagined, — if a theory so extraordinary really deserve discussion, — can it be imagined for a moment that men like those two members of our House, Signor Stoppato and Signor Raimondo, or Senator Canevaro, or Senator Bensa, or General Caneva, could possibly lend themselves to any such falsification, of which in that case they would be the deliberate accomplices?

The powers of the Commission have been discussed; but here a very curious mistake has been made.

When mention is made of the judicial powers of a Commission of Inquiry, people imagine that the Commission in question becomes thereby a species of autocrat, vested with powers to dispose of the liberties and the property of fellow-citizens. But the truth of the matter is, that in the case of a Commission of Inquiry judicial powers have never had this fullness and never can have, unless it is to become a special judicial Commission: which would be quite contrary to all our public law and to the most vital principles on which modern States are based.

Judicial powers, in the sense in which it is permitted to use the term in connection with a Commission of Inquiry, have reference simply to the mode of securing the due means for the ascertainment of the truth: and these means may be things, documents or persons qualified to give evidence.

In the case in question, since the matters the Commission has to deal with are presumably all included within the sphere of the official organisation of the State, as the documents to be taken into consideration are those of the War Office and the Head-Quarters Staff, and the case concerns officers who hold commissions in the Army, — the means to compel if necessary the public bodies and individuals in question to place themselves at the disposition of the Commission are already found in the official organisation above referred to.

Hence, no difficulty could arise, except in the

possible case of a person who was not a member of this organisation. It is most unlikely that such a case will occur; but still if there is in the very least degree the impression that, from this point of view, the powers of the Commission are not sufficient, I see no reason why I should not inform the House that measures are about to be taken to confer on the Commission full judicial power, I mean of course as regards all that concerns the official organisation of the State and the documents relating to Army affairs.

### Home Affairs.

I come now to the questions relating to what are generally termed Home affairs: — and first of all I must refer to the censorship. If, just as we say « a bad press », we may be permitted to use a similar phrase in speaking of Parliament, then it must certainly be confessed that the censorship has indeed « a bad Parliament ».

It has been severely, bitterly criticised in this debate and in previous ones; but I will confine myself to this present one.

Substantial reforms in the system have been demanded by all parties in the House: one may say that on this head there has been complete unanimity.

The « Fascio » has in preparation a motion by my honourable friend, Signor Ciccotti, aggressive to the extreme. The speaker I might surely describe as of most authority in the « Parliamentary Union », my honourable friend Signor Toscarelli (*Comments*), he too has demanded a radical reform. I need say nothing of the Socialists. But the independents, too, or shall we say, the trimmers, have found words of bitterest censure for the censors. I need only mention the names of two honourable members, Signor Labriola and Signor Colajanni. Now, to a dispassionate observer, this unanimity means two things: — first of all, that really matters are not going well, and this is not comforting to a Minister; and secondly, and this is

comforting to a Minister, that these defects may be and probably are inherent in something that, we shall see, or at all events may see if we will, is more or less inseparable from the system, but that cannot possibly be taken as indicating a *parti pris* in a political sense.

All this, I repeat, cannot possibly be taken as justifying the charge which would be so damaging to the political reputation of a Minister; — viz: that he made use of the censorship for secondary ends of a political nature.

But things are not going well, and I have to admit it. I cannot say — even though here I may err in proclaiming overmuch my own merits, — I cannot say that this has been due to any lack of effort, so far as I am personally concerned, to find a way to remedy the inconveniences that time has gradually been bringing to the light.

I do not remember which of the speakers it was who said: « Why do you not draw up instructions to serve us a guide to the censors? » Well I did do something in this direction, and spite the never-ending occupations and preoccupations of my office, I found the time to compose this « censor's catechism ». But in the very act of composing it, I called to mind that clever note they quote from a book I have never seen but which is said to have been published in the year 700, with the title « Rome in the Shade ». This book indicated the routes to be taken so as to be able always to keep in the shade; but from time to time, when one got to a certain point, — to a certain square, say, — the author could give no other indication but the following: « Skip this ». Well, when I drew up these instructions, I found myself fairly often at « Skip this ». For the matter dealt with is such, there must inevitably be so much that is subjective in the estimate of it, that at a certain point the Minister is absolutely forced to leave the decision to the censor. This is inevitable; and it means, the impossibility of laying down precise and absolute rules.

The subjective element, then, has for its result that variety of criteria which gives rise to multifarious and regrettable inconveniences. But this is not all.

Let us consider the question in all sincerity: I have already said that here as always I do everything in my power to look at things from a purely objective point of view. Another reason, then, is the impossibility that the average censor should be intellectually superior to the average writer under censorship.

The work of censorship in fact presupposes a superexcellence of mind and soul requiring in every censor a combination of qualities of the highest order, of gifts really superior; and as this, for obvious reasons, is very far from easy to find, it is, if I may so express it, the very nature of things that causes the inconveniences so deplored. (*Comments.*)

Sig. TREVES — Well, abolish it, then!

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — If I allow myself to indulge in criticism of this kind, it is obviously because I hold that the system should be reformed.

Sig. TREVES — When?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — Bout we must consider on what lines it is to be reformed. I cannot possibly accept the view expressed by some speakers; — the abolition of the censorship *sic et simpliciter*. And as to this, my honourable friend, Signor Toscarelli, while saying very hard things about the censorship, supplied me with the most weighty arguments in support of the necessity of a limitation of the form of liberty here in question, when he quoted and commented on that saying of Marshal Moltke's, — that in time of war there is no reading more instructive than the enemy's newspapers.

It is impossible, then, to speak of abolition: we all understand that. Nobody can help understanding it but one who does not *feel* the war, who is insensible to it. This is what sometimes makes discussion difficult between you Socialists and us, that you

assert — (but perhaps, in part at least you do not really mean it after all) — that you are thus insensible. Well, if you are, you cannot put yourself in the place of those who, not having this insensibility, perceive the necessity of some limitations. (« *Hear, hear!* ». *Cheers from the Right*). To every one, in fact, who does not share this insensibility, it is inconceivable that, while all the rights of individual liberty, including the most sacred of them all, the right to one's own existence, the right to the security of one's own existence, are so profoundly limited by the war, there should exist this anarchical right, this right apart, arrogating to itself a superiority to every limit or interference whatsoever. (*Loud cheers.*)

Sig. TURATI — But it was the censorship that gave us Caporetto. (*Loud murmurs. Disorder.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — I ask you, Signor Turati, to note that, in telling you I am on the point of taking this reform in hand, I can give you a distinct assurance. It is an assurance that should cause dissatisfaction in this part of the House (*pointing to the Right*): and it is, that I shall not adopt, that I have no thought whatever of adopting the systems dear to a party that has had your highest praise, your most glowing panegyrics. I might (and if I did, it would not be for you of the Socialist Party to excite yourselves against me. for I should be simply following the example of those great men you have so exalted), — I might adopt the system of your friends the Bolsheviks, who decreed the suppression of all the newspapers in opposition to them. (*Prolonged cheers from the Right. Protests from the Left. Disorder.*)

You cannot deny that this is so. You don't agree in this with the Leninists and Bolsheviks? Well and good: but the facts you cannot deny.

And they do more than suppress the newspapers. For this party has beaten the record of the worst autocratic Governments, which confined themselves to suppressing the newspapers, and does worse than

that: — it seizes the types of the newspaper opposed to it and gives them to a paper that is friendly; — which is just as if I were to seize the types of the «Avanti» \* to give them to the «Idea Nazionale» !\* (*Laughter. Protests from the Extreme Left. Disorder.*)

What, then, is the criterion we should take as our guide in a reform of the system under discussion? Clearly this: — the old antithesis, as regards individual liberty, between prevention and repression.

The censorship, as regards the right of liberty of the press, represents the very quintessence of prevention; and this is why (so do not be in too great a hurry to hurl your charges and your reproaches at the censorship), — this is why this curious thing has happened: — that, spite the state of war and all that the state of war brings with it of restriction, the censorship has put a stop entirely to press prosecutions. (*Comments. Disorder on the Extreme Left.*) It has become, in a certain sense, your guarantee,

The censorship, then, represents the method of prevention. You do not like it? Nobody likes it; and it has had results that we cannot congratulate ourselves on.

Well, this being so, it is clear that reform there can only be in the sense of a return to the methods of repression, which give the leader-writer back his full liberty, accompanied as a natural consequence by his full responsibility. («Hear, hear!» from the Right. *Comments. Disorder on the Extreme Left.*)

But considering — . . . . .

Sig. BENTINI — Political suicide.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — I do not know who it was that interrupted me, — But what importance now has life, in every sense, at an hour like this? (*Loud cheers.*)

If you think I am reserving myself for other destinies, at the hour when the fate of my Country

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\* The organs of the Socialist Party and the Nationalist.

is at stake, you are very much mistaken. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

But to consider the question of our home policy from the general point of view, — I have been accused (*pointing to the Extreme Left of the House*) — of adopting a reactionary policy.

*Cries from the Right* — It is the same old song!

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — One honourable gentleman (Sig. Turati) has taken a different line from his friends.

Sig. TURATI — It happens to me often.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — But however much I can and ought to be grateful to him for the view he has expressed, which to me personally is friendliness itself, still, though unbiassed, I hope, by overmuch *amour propre*, I must say I cannot profess any particular liking for the form of defence he has chosen for me, when he excludes the charge of reactionary against my policy, and calls it instead a policy of nullity, — a «no policy».

A reactionary policy, — that is what it is to those two other honourable members, Signor Casalini and Signor Treves: but both the one and the other of these have taken as demonstrated what it was their business to demonstrate.

One honourable gentleman only, Signor Treves, has made distinct and definite reference, — as proofs of this reaction to which I have abandoned myself, — to the censorship, to the more rigid restrictions of the right of public meeting, and to the arrest of Signor Lazzari.

Now, as to the censorship, I have already said plainly enough, that everybody complains of it: which is at least a proof that the bad working of it cannot have anything to do either with a political precept or with a preconceived policy.

As to the right of public meeting, so far as I know, nothing new has been done respecting it.

Well, then, nothing remains but the last charge, the arrest of Signor Lazzari.

Now as to the arrest of Lazzari I have nothing to add to what I said when the honourable member (Sig. Turati) put his question. The arrest of Lazzari is an act of the judicial authorities pure and simple. I cannot permit the arrest of persons to become an index whether of reactionary policy or of liberal policy. Well, then, you have asserted and not proved, you have maintained and not demonstrated.

But there is a further question which it would be well to ask here, and that is, why I should defend myself or wish to defend myself from the charge of adopting a reactionary policy. Here there must be plain speaking. If I were convinced or could convince myself that what you call a reactionary policy would aid the cause of my Country in state of war, well I would adopt a reactionary policy without a moment's hesitation. (*Cheers.*)

But I for my part do not believe that a policy of reaction — (and there is no fear now of any misunderstanding as to the meaning of this expression) — would aid us in the war, to which I subordinate everything. (*Hear, hear!*)

And I do not believe it for the following reason. I will leave untold all that might be said from the point of view of the philosophy of history, or of academic dissertation, on this question. I will give you but one plain, practical reason, obvious at first sight: and it is that, from the moment a country is at war, it is bound to remain faithful to that system of institutions, with which is linked all that is of binding force between the State and the people. If, to my misfortune, I had had to live in a State under an autocratic form of Government, under the very worst of tyrannies, well, during the war, I should have been on the side of the autocrat, because, when a nation is engaged in a war against a foreign foe,



it has no right to divert its energies to what only concerns its own domestic economy.

And this is why high praise should be given by a Minister of the Crown to a party, — (never mind if, when you are at variance with that party, you break your jests on it, asserting that it is made up of just four men and a corporal), — I refer to the Republican Party, — which, though it holds firm to the ideal proclaimed by Mazzini, none the less, at the hour when the Fatherland was in peril, rallied as one man round the King. (*Loud Cheers. Interruptions from the Extreme Left. Taunts and retorts exchanged between Signor Zibordi and Signor Colajanni.*)

### Our war policy.

So, then, I cannot think useful to my Country in time of war a policy of reaction, if by this you mean a policy of the suppression of liberty, and I can give the expression no other meaning, unless in using it we are to have no other motive but the wish to exchange abusive epithets and treat the word «reactionary» as equivalent to «Austrian».

But if we are to give the word «reactionary» the meaning that correctly and, I should add, scientifically belongs to it, then I should hold that «reaction» means not remaining faithful to the spirit of our liberal institutions. (*Hear, hear!*)

But, here a gross error has been made, an error which has found its echo too in other quarters, when critics have been busy discussing the views I have expressed in this connection.

People say: «Liberty! why, liberty is inconceivable under a war-régime. A war-régime takes for granted a continual sacrifice of individual liberty». Now here there is a fundamental mistake. The idea of liberty is most assuredly not in antithesis to the idea of

limitation. The idea of limitation is the complement of the idea of liberty. The idea of liberty is in anti-thesis to the conception of arbitrary free-will, of violence; and it is violated, not when we fix a limit to it, but when this limit, instead of subserving the supreme interests of the State, subserves the aims and interests of persons or of parties in it. (*Loud cheers. Murmurs and comments from the Extreme Left.*)

Limits to individual liberties have been imported into our State by reason of the war, and they are perfectly legitimate.

Of course, in any such case, the doubt must always remain, first, whether such limits are adequate, — (and if they are not, then they must be reinforced by others) (*Hear, hear!*); and secondly whether such limits are observed, in other words, whether the machine of the State in all its parts responds to the central force impelling it, to the sentiment, the spirit, that animates it; and that sentiment, that spirit is, — *defend the Fatherland.*

If, then, defect there be, in the one sense or in the other, it is our clear and bounden duty to correct such defect and to remedy it. (*Hear! hear!*)

Well, it seems to me that all I need say more now is a word or two on what I may term the situation in general, that which is ever uppermost in our thoughts, in our anxieties, that which, (if I may so express it), is to us what to the earth is the pole, where all meridians meet, — that which sums up in itself alone all the questions our very existence depends on, our foreign policy, our home policy, our military policy, our policy as to supplies, and so on through them all.

What is our present situation?

Now pardon me one remark on this head which may seem to savour of pride. All this long debate, all the numerous speeches we have heard during it, from speakers looking at the question from the most widely different points of view, have not modified it

an iota, as set forth by the Government briefly, soberly, and — I can now say with some pride, — definitively, in our communications to the House. (*Hear, hear!*) This is really the only vital point to honourable members of every Section of this House, this is all that should compel our care: the rest, as Hamlet would say, is silence.

Some speakers, — and I owe them special thanks. — my honourable friends, Signor Raimondo and Signor Ruini, for instance, — were eloquent commentators in the development of the essential points laid down in our statements to the House, Others, on the contrary, with more or less savour of opposition, have strayed this way and that, have sought right and left, have asked questions and breathed hopes, have invoked this speaker the Pope and that the anarchist; every possibility has been borne in mind and brought before us once more for consideration: — but still the question remains, as though fettered in links of steel, precisely where it was before. When the Government presented itself before this honourable House and declared that every abstract possibility had been taken into account but that the discussion of them had been found perfectly otiose, as the enemy practically left us no choice but to accept the peace he chose to offer us, — it told you the plain and simple truth, which opens up to us no other path, grants us no other solution. I said, then, and I repeat: — every abstract possibility was by us examined, weighed and sifted; which is simply to say that our minds are wholly unprejudiced: we feel all the tragedy of the hour, all the gravity of the conflict, and we have no intention whatever of excluding *a priori* any way of issue from this agonized struggle of humanity. But it is the enemy that puts this constraint on us, that puts us with our back against the wall: — how are we to defend ourselves, that is the question, and all that has been said on all possible matters, in all possible ways of saying it, is nothing more than endless circumlocution round

this one point. If some note has been struck here in this House that had an air of novelty, it is that we have heard from some honourable friends who are dear to us, our comrades now as ever, I doubt not, in our conviction of the necessity and the justice of this war; — but who have taken up an attitude somewhat peculiar to themselves. My honourable friend, Signor Labriola, who now represents a wing of the war party so extreme that it wellnigh begins to rub shoulders with the war's adversaries, — and my honourable friends, Signor Cabrini and Signor Ivanoe Bonomi too, — have indeed uttered words which fairly won the consent and applause of the Socialist Party, who solaced them by their assent, exclaiming: — « Why, this is what we have said and now are saying ». Well, what is it that these honourable friends of ours have said: — « Beware », (they cry) — « beware of « the power of ideas: do you not see, do you not feel « that a new order of things is coming into being, « that the consciousness of the peoples is awaking, « that new ideas are taking fire, that from their flame « are springing forth new ideals, which every hour « with more and more of power are asserting their « influence? »

This is what they have told us.

True; most true, is my answer: and assuredly it is not for me, an idealist to the very inmost soul, and in the very highest sense, and responsive to every wave of sentiment, — it is not for me to deny the power of ideas. I bow in reverence before them; but — on one condition. And it is in the interest of ideas that I make it: — it is because I would not have these ideas dishonoured, mutilated, that I tell you the idea must assert itself as force, must assert itself as will, — will to overcome all the obstacles that would thwart it.

Why the very idea of God, the Divine Idea, became incarnate, from will to act, to suffer, to overcome all obstacles in virtue of that suffering! But you, — what

do you for these ideas? (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

They are to you as the sun of the great days to be. And amid the darkness and horror of the strife, you go off tranquilly to your beds, awaiting there the hour when tomorrow's day shall dawn and the sun shall arise in his glory. (*Loud and prolonged cheers. Taunts and retorts interchanged between some members of the Extreme Left and others of the Right.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — I give you reasons. What is the good of shouting me down? (*Disorder on the Extreme Left.*)

### President Wilson's proposals.

You have admired the proposals of President Wilson. Nay, now and again, it really almost seemed you even went so far as to accuse him of plagiarism. Have you not practically said: «What does he do but repeat what we have said at Zimmerwald and at Kienthal?» Now and again it might seem that President Wilson and the American Republic were your allies instead of ours! (*Comments.*)

Now let us consider Wilson's last message.

Wilson says that the principles that should guide us are the following: each part of the final solution should be based on the essential justice of the claim in question, that settlement being preferred which is most qualified to secure a permanent peace; — that there must be no trafficking in peoples or provinces, no transferring them from one sovereign to another, like pieces in a game, even were it in that great game, now for ever discredited, the balance of power; — that every question of territory involved in the war must be settled in the interest and for the advantage of the inhabitants of the said territory; — and so on.

What can be more noble, more lofty, more beautiful in the province of ideas? You should applaud it. (*Comments.*)

But the full creed of this Wilson you so admire is not in all this. And I ask you now whether, in approving of Wilson's programme and applauding those axioms of his I have just referred to, you mean to imply your assent to the second part too of that programme, which is this: — « Our resources are up to now only mobilized in part, but we shall not rest till they all are ».

« All our power shall be dedicated to the service of this war ».

That is the way to do service to Humanity! (*Loud and prolonged cheers from the Centre and the Right.*)

And this brings to my mind, by a natural association of ideas, a well-known historic anecdote. Those Puritans in old days, who after the revolution under Cromwell left their native land to escape the arbitrary rule of the Stuarts, and formed the earlier settlements in America, came to it bearing with them Cromwell's maxim « Trust in God », — (here we have the doctrine) — « and keep your powder dry ! » — (the practice). —

You honour the doctrine, the idea, but you serve it not, — nay by a vain ideology you weaken it. (*Loud and prolonged cheers. Interruption from the Extreme Left.*)

What is our idea, at this hour? Well, at the beginning of the great world-war ideas might differ; but at this present hour there can be for us all but one idea, urgent, sole, all-engrossing, — at this hour when the hard yoke of the invader oppresses a fragment on our border, a beloved and glorious fragment, of the sacred soil of the Fatherland.

The House cannot better close this debate than by listening to a voice that comes to us from beyond the front our armies stand on guard at.

**“ Monte Grappa, thou art my Fatherland ! „**

I refer to a communication received to-day from the Head-Quarters Staff, bringing to our notice the

following facts, gleaned from the examination of an Austrian non-commissioned officer belonging to one of the persecuted nationalities, a Bohemian, who came over of his own accord to our lines at Monte Pertica. It is the voice of our brethren there on the other side of the Piave.

« The population of Fonzaso, composed chiefly of « women and children, live in silent retirement, maintaining before the Austrians a proud and dignified « bearing. Sorrow is to be read in the face of every « Italian. (*Excitement in the House.*) Every day the « churches are thronged with worshippers. Often in « the streets are to be seen women who, when they « meet, burst into tears. (*Renewed excitement.*) The boys « go about singing a song with the refrain « Monte « Grappa, thou art my Fatherland ! » This song is prohibited by the Austrian authorities. The bells have « been removed from the belfry. It was hard to bear, « when the bells were thrown down from the belfry « and shivered in pieces before the eyes of the people. « Some of them picked up fragments of the bronze « and keep them as sacred relics. (*Renewed excitement.*) « The bells thus broken up, were at once loaded on « motor-lorries and sent off to Primolano. There is « much talk among the people in the place, of an Italian counter-offensive to drive back the Austrians. » (*Great excitement throughout the House.*)

Now this message that comes to us from our oppressed brethren, this message that is at one and the same time hope, faith, goad, — be it the worthy close to this debate. (*Loud, general and prolonged applause, renewed again and again and taken up by the occupants of the various galleries, breaks out at the close of the Prime Minister's speech. The members of the House and all who are in the galleries spring to their feet, waving their handkerchiefs. With loud cheers the Members turn towards the Gallery reserved for the Army, with cries of « Hurrah for the Army ! » Enthusiastic shouts of « Hurrah for Italy ! », often repeated, follow. A crowd of Members*

*hurry to congratulate the Prime Minister, amid cheers for him once more renewed.)*

Signor L. BISSOLATI, Minister for Military Aid and Pensions (*with all the power of his voice*) — Till death! Till death! (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

(*The President of the Chamber comes down from his chair and approaching the Front Bench where the Ministers are seated, grasps the hand of the Prime Minister. Loud and general cheers rise once more, mingled with oft-repeated cries of « Hurrah for Italy! ».*)



## THE AFTER-WAR PROBLEMS AND THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY SITUATION

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*Before the Senate, March 4th, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council — The Senate of Italy has done well and worthily in that while we are oppressed by the ever urgent problem of a war that absorbs all the energies of our soul, it has raised the question of the problems which will confront us when the war is over, and raised it with so much enlightened discernment. It is, of course, the veriest commonplace, that in time of peace we must prepare for war: and the reverse is no less true, that in time of war we must bear in mind the problems peace will bring with it.

My honourable friend, Senator Scialoja, has discussed the question in a manner worthy of himself, with a profound insight and at the same time with a passionate sympathy, which cannot but win the approval and admiration of all who listened to him, — mine among the first. Perhaps, if I were to say anything by way of qualification, it would be this: — that his sympathy for the matter in hand has led him away, — has led him, I should rather say, (for he is not the man to be led away), — to over-estimate his theme, treating (and this is certainly a point of view worthy of a statesman), — treating the after-war problem in a vast sense and as inclusive of all the multifarious activities the people of Italy will have necessarily to display and

the Gouvernement to lend its hand to, in order to sustain that other form of formidable struggle between the nations, which immediately after the war we shall have to confront. I repeat, this is a comprehensive, but at the same time very extensive way of considering the problem, so much so that, in the heat of his oratory, my honourable friend has even gone so far as to say, that after the war the Italian people will have to round off its gifts of genius and improvisation with a spirit of discipline, system and order. Now nothing could possibly be more timely than such an aspiration. But whether and how far such a transformation of the nature and disposition of a people is to be expected from any system of institutions or from the labours, however enlightened, of any Commission or Government Department whatsoever, — well, here we may well find ourselves landed in the realm of delusion, I for my part consider the after-war problem after a manner somewhat more limited and at the same time more specific. I consider this problem in reference to the temporary questions which will confront us owing to the demobilisation military, economic, civil, aye and I would add spiritual too, of a people that has been for long years in war, and in what a war? Even in these reduced proportions, the problem remains sufficiently formidable.

My honourable friend (Senator Scialoja) referred to legislation only. As to all the arrangements that have been made under the pressure of urgency and necessity, and that have sometimes had to do with matters as to which it is not always possible to say whether their existence will be limited by the duration of the war, we cannot now decide whether they will continue to operate after the war is over. There is quite a body of juridical and legislative ordinance, in great measure provisional, and, in so far as it is so, to be then eliminated, transformed or absorbed.

Another very grave problem is the return amongst

us of four millions of men, the reflux of this mighty tide of the blood of our race.

Most serious, too, is the assurance of the means of exchange; for as every speaker in this debate has used the privilege of referring specially according to his own personal, subjective impressions, to this or that aspect of the after-war problem, the House will, I hope, allow me to refer to this; as, in my opinion, the gravest and most pressing problem of the after-war period will be how to cope with the return to the primitive methods of exchange.

Among the various peoples it will be true exchange. barter, which will be the determining factor in economic relations. «I want this much: but you must give me that much: — not gold, but the things I am in need of». And so to Italy it is not so much a question of tonnage, (here I am among the optimists); the end of the war, will of itself place a quantity of tonnage at our disposition and at the same time multiply the efficiency of what we have, now reduced by one half owing to the danger from the submarines. In the presence of that hard law of parsimony in which the peoples have already learnt their bitter lesson, it will not be the want of stowage, in the literal sense, that will cause the difficulty. It will be the weary search of the peoples after the refurnishing of the supplies they need, and for this the important point will not be, to have gold in hand, — for here we shall experience the fate of Midas, as my right honourable friend, Signor Nitti, pointed out, — aye, this and more than this; the nations will give grain, say, or coal, not against gold, but in exchange for some other commodity necessary to them to negotiate, to balance all that they have at their disposal in the way of exchange, the commodity man not excluded, he being one of a number of species of useful products.

For instance, — had we sulphur now: — it would be worth more than its weight in gold.

The Senate will see now why, even if I regard

the after-war problem, as indeed I do regard it, within limits more restricted than my honourable friend, Senator Scialoja, still it remains a problem of the very highest importance.

But I must briefly tell the House what has been done and what has not been done during the period when I have had the honour to be at the head of the Government.

When I took office at that never-to-be-forgotten moment, my very first application was to my friend, Scialoja, who very properly pointed out that his functions as president of the After-war Commission, being bound up with his status as Minister, lapsed with his official decease.

Political deaths, — (and this is the only good of being a politician) — have this in common with the deaths of divine persons, that they are deaths followed by resurrections: but the real truth is that, as president of the After-war Commission, my honourable friend could not say, even as a legal quibble, that he was dead, because, as a matter of fact he had never been born. (*Loud laughter.*)

He has told us that he was the president of the Commission, but Commission as yet there was none; so he was a president of the other side of to-morrow; I beg pardon: there may perhaps be such a thing as death within the womb. (*Loud laughter.*)

My honourable friend told me on that occasion some things I recognised to be just and acute: « This is no mere question to be studied: » he said: « all « the study that can be made of it has already been « made by me: it is a study » — (and here he is perfectly right) — « which must be accompanied by « Government and State action: in order that the study « of it may be efficacious, he who has the superintendence of it must have at his disposal the ready « response of all the public Departments which have « it in their power to co-operate in the preparation of « the data on which it is to be based ».

I remember, too, that he told me further, that such action cannot be placed under the control of any single Minister, because such a one will always find himself clashing with other Ministers with whom he will be bound to come into contact, each jealous to preserve what he considers the due rights of his Department; — a sentiment this in the soul of the bureaucrat, which is insuperable; and he ends by transmitting it, through a process of infusion, into the Minister that is over him. — And; so — (my honourable friend went on to say) — one must be President of the Council to be sure of the obedience of all the various organs of the State. — I confess I shuddered (*Laughter*); for if, as President of the Council and with all the varied responsibilities that are already on my shoulders, I was to busy myself too, and after this manner, with the After-war problem, I should certainly have found that problem insoluble. So I have thought out a system, — (and we shall see it in operation, as the decree goes up to the Vice-regent for his signature on Thursday), — which brings the action of the Commission — (for here a Commission is useful, however Commissions in general have a bad name), — into harmony with that of a multiplicity, a wide diversity of men, of ways of thinking, of capacities, in all the various departments, technical, bureaucratic, and so on.

I have established a system that should combine the advantages of commissions with the advantages of departments of the State; and I have taken upon me, though only in part, the function of guiding hand that my friend Scialoja suggested to me, placing this new body in direct dependence on the President of the Council. Well, this has been done: — done somewhat late in the day, I admit; but the House must bear in mind what anxious hours we have passed through, and still are passing through.

Under one aspect of the case, before the problems that press upon us from all sides, I am reminded of

those dreadful days I witnessed from the 30th of December 1908 to the end of the following January at Messina, immediately after the terrible earthquake. Then, when somebody came up to you and said, «I am dying of hunger», you were insensible to his appeal: it seemed a thing of no account: there was many a distress, many a need, which under ordinary circumstances would have seemed of the gravest, but in that hour seemed, I will not say as nothing, but of minor importance, when we were face to face with other distresses, other needs, to which aid was imperative.

I trust this will be borne in mind when censures and reflections — (I am not referring to my friend Scialoja, I am speaking generally) — are made on the Government for tardiness in their measures: — people should bear in mind that we Ministers are giving our whole soul, our whole life to our duties, striving to multiply the intensity of our doing them by dint of an almost superhuman energy. If the first time I saw my honourable friend Scialoja I was on the eve of starting for the front, and if I came back from it only to start once more for Paris, is it any wonder that, between one Government measure and another the weeks ran on and grew into months?

My task is done, so far as it concerns the problems of the after-war: — let us come then to the problems of the war itself.

Well, with regard to the general question of the war, the Government, after this debate in the Senate, is entitled to arrive at the same conclusion it came to after the debate which took place in the other House, — namely that the speakers have recognised the essential truth of the Government's communications and the justice of the conclusions therein expressed. And this is clear not only from the approval explicitly signified in words for which I beg to offer them my thanks, by the honourable Senators Zappi, Mazziotti, Ruffini, Marconi and

Scialoja, but also — (what is more precious still) — from the intrinsic value of the things that have been said in this House.

A document of the nature of what it has been agreed to call a « Government communication », must necessarily be sober in its lines, sparing in its proofs, synthetic in its enunciations: and this is why what in this communication of ours was but a hasty outline or a brief allusion, has found ample and eloquent commentary in the speeches of eminent politicians who were not tied down to this special reserve and austerity of exposition. But, saving the aforesaid natural diversity of form, and considering only the essence of the matter, the Government rises from this debate comforted by the recognition of the complete identity between its own views and those expressed in this House. And this is no slight comfort, not only because of the high authority of this Exalted Assembly, but also because those grounds for calm resolution and tenacious perseverance are strengthened thereby which are proper to one who knows he is in the right, just as, in the contrary case, doubts and criticism constitute as many half-paralysing hindrances to action.

My honourable friends, Senator Mazziotti, and, after him, Senator Ruffini, have referred to new facts in the international world, which have taken place since our communications of the 12th of February: — the German advance into Russia, which has been simply a military promenade: the hastily patched up peace, which, even to its very form, may be better termed a surrender at discretion; the most recent statements of the German Chancellor. But although these events, chronologically considered, constitute new facts, it is still no less true that their effective weight had already been taken into account in the Government's communications; so that nothing has happened to nullify those communications or to modify them. As to Russia, taking into consideration the course of the negotiations at Brest-Litowsk, I had stated in so

many words that, given the moral and political factors leading up to them, they could not but end in a surrender pure and simple: I added too, that the allies at Versailles had taken the military situation into consideration on the basis of «the absolute and complete collapse of Russia». What has happened by successive stages since, was, then, virtually included in those communications.

### **Our enemies' official statements.**

And so, too, as regards the last declarations of Count Hertling, — if it is true, they are in form less haughty and arrogant than those that preceded them, still our communications had already pointed out that difference of tint or tone mattered little enough, when below the form, now harshly curt, now equivocally evasive, the practical import of the policy of the hostile Governments is to be summed up in the maintenance in their entirety of their own pretensions and the rejection in their entirety of all the just demands of others. This same substantial import is to be discovered in those last declarations made at Berlin, and on this head I need do no more than simply refer you to the clear and crushing criticism of them by the English Foreign Minister, Mr. Balfour, in the House of Commons; while as to certain aspects of them, I may refer you to what I said myself in the speech I delivered in this House towards the end of last December, when I dragged into the light all the insidious double dealing that lurked beneath the feigned adhesion of the Central Empires to the general declarations of principle contained in the proposals of the Government of the Bolsheviks. — Your Government, then, may solemnly declare once again that there is in Italy a perfect unanimity of all parties, save those to whom aversion to the war is an axiom to start with: and this unanimity asserts itself in the determination to



prosecute the war with all our energy and to resist at all costs, to the very last. (*Cheers.*)

### Italy and the oppressed nationalities.

On some special points already referred to by various speakers, it will be well too that the Government should say a word. My honourable friend, Senator De Novellis, has made an impassioned appeal to us, reaffirming in this House the claim on our sympathy of a people small in extent but great in the heroism of its story and the strategic and geographical importance of its territory, — the people of Montenegro. I assure my honourable friend, that this sympathy is deeply felt by the Italian Government, and that the freeing of that people from the present occupation of its territory by the foreigner forms part of the war-policy of Italy and of all the powers of the *Entente*.

And later on, my honourable friend, Senator Ruffini, with impassioned eloquence in his words and convincing force in his arguments, touched with a master-hand the grave question of the attitude of Italy towards the aspirations of the Southern Slavs. May I be permitted to point out that in this part of it, too, my honourable friend's speech is but an eloquent paraphrase of some ideas the Government had already expressed in its communications; and this I say, not for any petty vaunt of priority, but on the contrary, to show how spontaneous is my assent to the general spirit by which my honourable friend's words were animated.

Political action, as indeed the moral conduct of the individual, cannot be held to be determined wholly by sentiment or wholly by interest: there is a point — (and the vital matter is to reach it and to hold fast to it) — where sentiment links itself with interest, — the former representing the guiding line and the latter the force of propulsion. Bearing this in mind, while, whatever a miserable and fallacious legend may

have asserted to the contrary, the sentiment of fervid sympathy for the cause of all the oppressed nationalities is of old date in Italy, we must no less admit that the profound changes which have taken place in these last eventful years, a few months of which are equivalent to cycles of story, have reinforced the purely ideal sentiment by reasons of interest, — or (which amounts to the same thing) have swept away reasons of interest which in earlier days were strong enough to keep that sentiment in part from expressing itself.

I will not enter now into the enquiry into the efficiency of these factors, which has already been made with such ability by my honourable friend, Senator Ruffini, in a line of argument which in great measure I might adopt as my own: we have need but to remember that, if Italy in this war pursues the essential end of securing defensible frontiers and guarding the imprescriptible rights of the Italic race, it is obvious what an influence may be exerted on this our double aim by the establishment on our frontier of a people sincerely united with us in its determination to advance by our side along the common path of progress and civilisation.

### Italians and Slavs.

And obvious, too, is this further consideration, that those races which the Italians find themselves neighbours to and in part even mingled with, those Southern and Adriatic Slavs, to whom Senator Ruffini more particularly referred, are, they too, like some of our own brethren, nationalities under the domination of Austria; and it has been simply through the traditional astuteness of that State that the racial passions of the various nationalities have been let loose upon one another, and that these nationalities have been set at one another, so that Austria may more easily be able to keep them all in subjection. It seems, then, our natural and necessary policy to take the line opposed to that which has been so useful to our enemy, and

to substitute for the collisions and the hatreds artificially excited and fomented, the union that grows out of common suffering: and no really substantial ground for variance stands in the way of such agreement, if only loyally and sincerely investigation be made into the conditions requisite for mutual existence at the cost of mutual sacrifices on the part of this or that race in the gray zones that lie between the confines of the great nationalities, and if, lastly, just guarantees be created in those cases where the races are inextricably mingled and the common need of secure existence may compel us to attach them to one or the other of the two State groups.

All this may be done, all this ought to be done, without its being necessary — (and far from being necessary, it is not even useful) — to decide at the present moment what influence such a policy may have on the essential objects of the war. The war has but one sole object —, to conquer: and the means to accomplish that object is this alone, — to do all in our power to weaken the enemy. This is all that it is useful to say as to the objects of the war and as to the means to accomplish them: — all else is mere academical discussion and vain digression. And besides, of this we may be certain; that to remove the most unfortunate misunderstanding that had grown up as to the mutual bearing of the aspirations of Italy and the sentiments of the Adriatic Slavs would mean to create a new *Entente*, in itself just and useful: no other reason, then, need be urged why on our part the formation of such an *Entente* should be furthered with all our power by the most sincere and cordial cooperation. (*Hear, hear!*)

### The Inner Line of Resistance.

Passing now to internal affairs, it seems to me illustrious senators, to be quite unnecessary to affirm once more the calm, invincible resolution of the Government to maintain intact the political and social frame-

work of the Country, not, of course, from the point of view of this or that abstract theory, or this or that party creed, but purely and simply as a necessity of war, no less important than the resistance of our troops at the front. The celebrated principle, « *salus publica suprema lex* », which was the soul of Roman public law, was independent of the form of Government, aristocratic or democratic, monarchic, republican or imperial, a clear proof this from the enlightened experience of the greatest people of all history that, in the presence of the needs of the country in state of war, it cannot be suffered that this or that element of the institutions composing it should arrogate the right to prevail over the necessity of the safety of the State. Again, even if we had before any doubt of the fact — (and we never had any), — explicit proofs which have recently come to our knowledge have evidenced to us that an integral part of the programme of the German offensive is the fomenting of popular outbreaks and every other means of weakening the *morale* of the States with which Germany is at war. Who, then, after this, can *bonâ fide* doubt that every attempt to shake or disturb the perfect union of the country is treason in the very strictest sense of the word? But though on this no doubt can possibly exist, there is one point in connection with it on which it is well specially to insist. The vital organism of a nation is not endangered merely by the open and brutal action that disturbs the public peace, or by the propaganda, criminal indeed but at least not equivocal, carried on directly against the war, — but also by every agency, whatever be its form or nature, which practically results in lowering the public spirit, in exciting alarm, in shaking men's confidence either in the army or in the Government, — (not in the men, I mean of course, who compose it, but in its entity as an institution of the State), — or finally, in the most ample and general sense, in shaking the confidence of the Nation in itself. (*Hear, hear!*)

## The Evil Arts of the Enemy and the Duty of the Government.

Occupying as I do that great observatory of the public spirit, the Palazzo Braschi, (\*) I am bound to say that never as in this last period of the war have I noticed such an extraordinary succession, nay I may even say a concourse, of alarming intelligence, of threatening rumours of all kinds and in all senses, intelligence and rumours of which, even when they are fairly precise and specific, — (and this is the rarer case), — one ends by ascertaining in general the absolute want of foundation.

Perfectly aware as I am of the mastery of our enemies in the arts of perfidy, I have no hesitation in recognizing in all this the undoubtedly genuine mark of wares made in Germany. Well, against this extremest form of our enemies' insidious attacks there is but one sole defence, and it is: — « Steady the nerves! » And it is with this view only, with the view, I mean, to maintain the firmness of the public spirit of a people in state of war, that I beg the Senate to permit me one brief allusion to some recent events, which have been already referred to in this House. Although the matter has been referred to by a speaker (Senator Mazziotti) in a debate on our policy in general, I have no wish to reopen and I have no intention to reopen the discussion on what may be termed the merits of the case. I intend to limit myself to an axiom which I am sure before I enunciate it no one inside this House, and no one outside it, will dissent from, — no one, I should add, who places the war above all other considerations or ends whatsoever. I shall not dwell, then, on considerations which, of course, have a great and incontestable weight in the life of

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(\*) The « Home Office » of Italy.

a people under ordinary circumstances, insomuch that it is held to be contrary alike to decorum and to civil duty to disturb the austere serenity of justice by anticipating its decisions by excited discussions.

I repeat that I will not dwell on such considerations as these, fixed as I am to consider everything *sub specie belli*, from the point of view of the war, not shrinking even before the paradox of subordinating the ordinary notions of right and wrong to the supreme test in all cases, usefulness to the war. Well, from this point of view, it is most undoubtedly useful to the war, and is as certainly one of the principal duties of the Government, to unmask and to punish all those, to whatever class of society they belong, who violate or forget their duty to their Country: — it is useful and it is essential, with the sword of an inexorable justice, to parry and to return the blows with which our enemies' formidable organisation so treacherously stabs us. The Government proclaims anew this its duty every time it shows by its acts that it is decided firmly to discharge it, not only by those acts which, taking the form of prosecutions in the Courts of law, have made most impression on the public, but also by others, which have made less noise, but are of no less importance.

The Government assures Parliament and the Country, that justice shall have its course severely, inexorably, and, so far as may be, swiftly, for swiftness of action here makes action more efficacious by way of example. It is right that this should be done, and it is of use no less. But allow me to add with the same frankness, that it is not of use to a people engaged in a mortal struggle such as this is, to lose its balance and its *sang froid*, even if under the sway of the most just indignation. It is not of use to over-excite public opinion, treating painful facts and criminal hypotheses as so much nutriment to a morbid and malevolent curiosity. It is not of use to the cause of a nation in state of war to create a system of violent and

passionate accusations, which, going beyond the intentions of those who set them on foot, end by exciting distrust and suspicion not only against the persons they are aimed at, but also against the public Departments which together form the Government of a country.

Most unfairly people forget how extreme is the difficulty and complexity of a problem so delicate as that of the exportations to be permitted or prohibited in time of war; and in the rage for summary sentence, it is even forgotten that the final decision as to the advisability or not of any such arrangement is not only the result of the careful co-operation of a number of public departments which certainly cannot without the most arrogant presumption be believed tainted every one of them with carelessness or incompetence, but forms part of an interstate system, owing to which the point of view of the Italian Government comes into competition in due course with the points of view of all the other allied Governments, so that the decision may well be termed a final resultant from widely different forces.

However, let there be discussion of course, let there be judgment on every kind of responsibility. Let justice accomplish her mission of purification and of punishment, no power on earth being suffered to turn her aside from the straight path that is hers. But the essence of the matter is this: — that the spirit of the nation as a whole be not diverted from the discipline it so needs, be not allowed to deviate one single hair from its one and supreme end and aim, which is: — resist to conquer: conquer to live! (*Cheers.*)

### Never Say Die!

Senator Ruffini has with resistless eloquence told us that the judgment of history shows that Novara was necessary: — perhaps, one day, history will show us

that all was not loss in the disaster of Caporetto. Great sorrows pass over the lives of individuals, like mighty winds of purification; and, no less, great universal calamities may to the peoples they fall upon be a rude but salutary school of discipline and of duty. None of the great peoples whose glory is brightest in the history of Mankind have been spared the rudest strokes of adversity: — they were great not because they were spared misfortune, but because they showed themselves able to resist it and to overcome it. (*Hear, hear!*)

Of incomparably less importance had been the defeat at Adua: and yet after it the mind of our people seemed to be pervaded with a sense of nothingness, of annihilation, and all in vain seemed to have been the brilliant story of our New Birth as a Nation, if a people that should have revealed itself in the flower and glow of its youth, was seen instead to bow beneath a defeat without will and without pride.

But in the years that followed, the national spirit had in the truest sense strengthened and tempered itself anew; and the virtues which firmly and definitively establish national unity, this war has revealed them not only, nay I would rather say not so much, in the first rush of enthusiasm and intoxication after our earliest victories, as in the hour of disaster when, for a brief instant, in a single moment of discouragement, the hard toils and sacrifices endured might seem to have been all for nought and the generous blood of the sons of Italy shed all in vain.

In that hour, tragic indeed, when it seemed as though our hearts must break, and when we too, inferior though we be in soul to the sovereign spirit of Niccolò Machiavelli, realised how one may die of anguish for the Fatherland, a mighty spirit of expiation and at the same time of energy renewed thrilled through all the Nation, and there was a fixed will at once desperate and conscious of its deed, wrought of faith and reason, to persevere in the struggle to the bitter



end, — to the last ounce, the last penny, of our resources, to the last drop of our blood.

### **The Fatherland must be immortal.**

If, then this hard, this tremendous trial was necessary, if it was fated that the people of the Italy of to-day should know by cruel experience, (as our fathers knew and our fathers' fathers, age after age from the day when Old Rome fell), what it means, invasion by the stranger, — we may now find in this a reason for proud consolation. And while to be able to say that Novara had not been in vain, were needed long years of obscure anguish and hard expiation, we, on the other hand, even now can say that not in vain for us there has been a Caporetto, since if it has rudely made us reel, it finds us now once more firm on our feet with our face set to the foe. (*Hear, hear!*)

The Italian people can and must be saved by the Government, cried my honourable friend, Senator Ruffini, It would seem but an absurd affectation of modesty if we were to take refuge in words strong enough to lighten the terrible burden of responsibility these words of his assign to us. What we would answer is rather that our humble insignificant personalities win from the grandeur of the events and the majesty of the duty that sways and guides us the will and the force to expend to the last, to the very end, all the energy that it is ours, quadrupling our too feeble powers by the very enthusiasm that fills our heart and soul. But in the accomplishment of this mission we are sustained by a sure trust without which we could do nothing, — a trust that in the soul, in the will, aye in the good sense of the people of Italy, we shall find in all its fullness the virtue and the energy to will and to assure its own salvation. We, we are but poor weak creatures, whom, as the Poet says, a sun sees born and a sun sees die:

we can — and, as we can, we ought — to make the sacrifice of all is ours of good, of our fortune, of our substance, of our life. But our Country must be immortal: we must do all, dare all, that Italy may live! (*Loud and general applause. All the Ministers and many Senators hasten to congratulate the speaker.*)

## TO THE NATIONALITIES OPPRESSED BY AUSTRIA

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Rome, Palazzo Braschi, April 11th, 1918

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To you, Mr. President\*, and to you all, Gentlemen, I beg to tender my thanks for the visit you have been pleased to honour me with. It affords me the opportunity of offering to you our guests the greeting of the Government of Italy, a greeting that is at the same time a most confident augury of the future that awaits you. And that the Italian Government is here the interpreter of the mind and heart of the whole Italian people, you have been able to verify for yourselves.

We have seen with the greatest pleasure the meeting of this your Congress here in Rome, the Great and Eternal Mother, in Rome where, throughout the ages, have ever found refuge and satisfaction the most representative spirits of every people and of every race, and where facts seem to rise to the height of an augury, of a presage, and to acquire an ideal significance: — *quod bonum felix faustumque sit.*

With how much sympathy the Italian Government over which I have the honour to preside, follows this work of concord and pacification among the subject nationalities of Austria-Hungary and their noble

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(\*) Senator Francesco Ruffini, President of the Conference of the Nationalities subject to Austria.

struggle for liberty, I believe I have already made abundantly clear. It is from no wish to gratify any personal vanity of my own, but simply to make perfectly clear to you how spontaneous has been the welcome I have given to the sentiments and the projects that have culminated in your Congress, that I beg you to permit me to read you some statements which, as the Head of the Government, I made before the Parliament of Italy, and which that Parliament showed its sympathy with, both by the applause with which my words were greeted, and by the votes of confidence with which it approved the policy of the Government.

### Italy's aims in the war.

I said, then, in the Chamber of Deputies on the 12th of February last: —

« And here I proclaim, before the Parliament of  
« Italy, that no one in the world can view with  
« greater sympathy than is ours the aspirations of the  
« various nationalities that groan beneath the oppres-  
« sion of races that lord it over them. And if their  
« cause wins large consent and awakens well-deserved  
« interest in every State that is also free, it finds in  
« Italy, from our historic fellowship of sorrows and  
« of hopes, hearts no less warm and one with theirs,  
« — in Italy, where the sentiments of abstract and  
« impartial justice find themselves linked in close union  
« with the remembrance ever burning within us of  
« what we suffered, what our brethren still are  
« suffering. »

And just after, I added: — « And it is our com-  
« mon, nay, perhaps, our vital interest, that the  
« inexplicable and most unfortunate misunderstanding  
« should be cleared away, which has grown up as to  
« the objects of our war. We have here once more,  
« for our own selves and for all the world, clearly  
« and loyally affirmed them, in the spirit that intimately  
« and essentially inspires them, as being exclusively

« directed towards the assurance of the national  
« integrity and defence against the agelong and  
« implacable menace of a hostile Power ».

And a few weeks later, on the 7th of March, I said in the Senate: — « If Italy in this war pursues  
« the essential end of securing defensible frontiers and  
« guarding the imprescriptible rights of the Italic  
« race, it is obvious what an influence may be exerted  
« on this our double aim by the establishment on  
« our frontier of a people sincerely united with us in  
« its determination to advance by our side along the  
« common path of progress and of civilisation.

« And obvious, too, is this further consideration,  
« that those races which the Italians find themselves  
« neighbours to and in part even mingled with, those  
« Southern and Adriatic Slavs, to whom Senator Ruffini  
« more particularly referred, are, they too, like some of  
« our own brethren, nationalities under the domination  
« of Austria; and it has been simply through the tra-  
« ditional astuteness of that State that the racial pas-  
« sions of the various nationalities have been let loose  
« upon one another, and that these nationalities have  
« been set at one another, so that Austria may more  
« easily be able to keep them all in subjection. It seems,  
« then, our natural and necessary policy to take the  
« line opposed to that which has been so useful to our  
« enemy, and to substitute for the collisions and the  
« hatreds artificially excited and fomented, the union  
« that grows out of common suffering: and no really  
« substantial ground for variance stands in the way of  
« such agreement, if only loyally and sincerely inves-  
« tigation were made into the conditions requisite for  
« mutual existence at the cost of mutual sacrifices on  
« the part of some groups of this or that race in the  
« gray zones that lie between the confines of the great  
« nationalities, — and if, lastly, just guarantees were  
« created in those cases where the races were inextrica-  
« bly mingled and the common need of secure existence

« compelled us to attach them to one or the other of  
« the two State groups. »

### **How it became possible to reconcile the aspirations of the various nationalities.**

If I am not mistaken, such has been the spirit inspiring your deliberations: and so there is no need for me to do more than express the pleasure this affords me. But here one naturally asks, how in the world it comes to pass that questions which seemed so insoluble have been found capable of solution after a manner so speedy and so felicitous.

There have been divers reasons, I think, for this. One of these is a psychological reason. This war has made us live a life so intense, that the months have the historic value of tens of years, and the years of centuries. And in like manner, the transformations in the souls and in the sentiments both of individuals and of peoples have taken place with the same bewildering speed, in the direction indicated to each by the nature that was his. Our enemies, (it would be absurd to deny), have made incomparable progress in the direction of the subtilising of their innate barbarism, the perfecting beyond all conception of their arts and means of violence and of brutality, of hypocrisy and of perfidy. And we, the nations of the *Entente*, peoples free and democratic, but, of course, not without our defects, — (for perfection is not of this world), — we, in this purging fire of slaughter, of suffering, of torturing anxiety, have set our face more steadfastly toward the ideals that are our goal, and have exalted ourselves ever higher above the sordid level of private interest and egoistic instinct.

And I think that among the causes of this changed temper of heart and soul, is to be numbered a sense purified by pain, — by pain the greatest of teachers, — the sense, I would say, that it is not well to subordinate to questions important if you please, but still

after all, secondary, the one essential question; — that it is not well to suffer one's soul to crystallize into prejudices as to the mode of being, when what is at hazard is — to be or not to be. Above all, — for the nations, — «to be». And suffer me here to address you not only us a warm and true friend, but as one who has the honour to represent a people that has been as sorely tried as any other in the world in that hard school in which the nations are formed and welded into one.

### **The story of the freeing of Italy our bitter lesson.**

Yes, in this sense, I can most truly assure you, that no people can more or better than the people of Italy sympathize with your cause, for no people can so fully as we realize your sorrows and your aspirations, the vexations you unjustly suffer and the hopes that give you radiant glimpses of a glorious future.

The story of Italy, in its fulfilment, is no other than your story, which still awaits fulfilment. We have an experience in this hard school that qualifies us as masters: — with all my heart I pray that in such school of experience you may never have the claim to mastery that is ours.

No other people, I repeat, before forming itself into a free and independent state, ever had to endure so long a slavery, so methodical an oppression, so refined and multiform a brutality. Like the noble Poland, a district of which we have but now seen bartered for so much grain, — like Poland Italy was rent, divided, parcelled out among the foreigners, and this land, the Mother of civilisation and the shrine and source of art and thought, was for long ages, in the treaties between the nations, regarded as a *res nullius*, of which the right to keep the largest share belonged naturally to the strongest occupant.

## The might of ideas.

The will, wrought to frenzy by wrong, of the people of Bohemia, that the glorious Kingdom shall rise once more, which in days of old so mightily humbled the pride of the German, is one and the same with the no less conscious and exasperated will, with which our grandsires and our sires conspired and rose in insurrection that Italy from many a petty State might be welded into one. The Slavs of the South and the Roumanians of Transylvania with the consciousness of their good cause already so intense and bursting all its bonds, have already their heroes and their martyrs, and lo, where draws near to greet them the endless train of the heroes and martyrs that are ours, and who across time and across space claim brotherhood in the gibbet, common to these and to those and raised on high by their common executioner.

To your peoples, «to be or not to be»: — this is, at the present hour, the inexorable alternative. Here are of no avail cautious subtleties, adroit reserves borrowed from the diplomatist, discussions more or less Byzantine, while the Turk is at the gates, — (and this is no mere figure of speech, for the Turks too are among the number of our enemies): — here nothing can help us save to have faith and to work. Work and faith: — that is how the nations are made.

And I cannot without profound emotion call to mind a conversation I had with a representative of one of your nationalities, who is present here to-day, and whose request to me was this: — «Let my fellow-countrymen fight in the ranks of your army». And my answer to him, was: — «How can I consent to «expose your people not only to the trials and risks «and perils of war, but to a danger still more grave, «still more sinister, still more terrible? When the «other soldiers have nobly done their duty and fall «perchance into the hands of the enemy, they have



«the right to that respect which is due to the prisoner of war, — but far other lot then awaits your people, the gallows. How can I let this be, without taking upon me in your favour a moral obligation to do that which might be, wellnigh at least, the adequate compensation for so immense a sacrifice?»

And his answer to me was this: «I require from you nothing. I acquit you of all moral obligation whatsoever. I ask nothing of you but this: — to suffer my people to die for their ideal».

Gentlemen, at that moment I was the Prime Minister of a Great State of thirty-six millions of free citizens, and before me was an exile, a wanderer without home, without country: but at that moment I felt my soul bow down in reverence before the lofty moral grandeur of that man who stood there the representative of the most potent force in all the world, the might of ideas.

### An epic moment.

One episode more. I heard of it during my recent visit to our front, and it was told me by an old soldier who witnessed it and could not speak of it without tears. It was night, dark night; and the foremost lines of our men and of the enemy were wrapped in that silence heavy with mystery and menace that broods over two armies standing face to face. In the Austrian outposts there was a section where there were many Czechs. Suddenly out of the gloom, rose up a melody: Homer only could have described the suggestive solemnity of that moment. It was the notes of the National Anthem of the Czechs. And then the sentries were seen to present arms, and the soldiers in the trenches to spring to their feet and bare their heads, remaining so until the Anthem was heard no more. Nothing could be simpler, nothing more impressive: there was borne down the night a burst of Epic glory. Those men, with before them the enemy, —

who knowing not what this could mean, might have brought them under their fire from the front, — and behind them another foe far worse, far more firm in hate, who at the sight of such a bold, such a splendid assertion of the consciousness of a race, might in their turn have treacherously shot at them from the rear, — those men feared not either the open danger or the lurking, and at the voice of the Fatherland sprang to their feet with heads reverently uncovered to listen to their National Anthem, to them the loftiest and most sacred of symbols.

My friends, through all these episodes I seem to see shine forth and gleam a Cross, the emblem of all sorrows and of all sufferings, the symbol of sacrifice and of death: but on that Cross is none the less graven and shines forth in radiant splendour the prophetic motto, the motto of hope and of faith: « *Under this sign shall ye conquer* ». And under this sign, my friends, shall you conquer.

## THE FRANCHISE TO THE COMBATANTS

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies; April 26th 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council — I think it well to say a few words at the commencement of the debate on this Bill, with the object of making perfectly clear at once what is the view of the Government as to the questions connected with it. I hope that in this way I may be able to simplify the debate and so be in some sense freed — (this at least is my opinion) — from the necessity of speaking again at the end of it.

Every one understands, — indeed, it was said plainly in this House yesterday, during the debate on the other parallel Bill on the prorogation of the legislature, — that there can be no difference of opinion whatever as to the measure suggested under the form of the Bill laid before this House by the Government and now under debate.

There is one Clause in it which one might almost say must be carried unanimously. Still, it is no less evident, even if we had not before us the resolutions and amendments and new clauses of which notice has been given, that this Clause in the Bill, although in itself it is such as to give no reason for any difference of opinion or doubt whatsoever, may give rise to all kinds of discussions as to the various possible electoral reforms.

Now I wish to state at once to the House what is the view of the Government as to these possible proposals for further reforms. The Government does not believe that the House is at the present moment in a position to come to a decision respecting them, and so it does not think it well to do anything now to prejudice the discussion of them in the future, whatever may be the opinion it has as regards any one of them. (*Loud cries of «Hear, hear!»*)

Let us take one or two of these proposals by way of example.

### Woman-Suffrage.

There is a book of mine which treats of electoral reform and is to me personally very dear, because what success I have had in my University career is linked with it, as it was the first book I wrote and I owe to it my success the first time I was chosen to occupy a chair at a University.

I was then very young, — (the book was published in 1882): thirty-six years have since passed away: — well, you can find in it my opinion in those days on all the questions that may now come up for debate, as it was a work of systematic completeness.

Signor TREVES — A most dangerous book!

The PRIME MINISTER — A dangerous book; but the time that has elapsed since then is so long, and the life we have lived so thronged with eventful history, that I may confess I have changed my opinion without very excessively scandalizing my hearers.

As to the age of eligibility to this House, so early as 1882 I expressed the opinion that the age fixed by our Fundamental Statute was too high, that it gave an old-mannish tinge to our parliamentary life, and that it would therefore be well to reduce the limit to the age of 25. I was then twenty-two. (*Laughter. Interruption.*)

Well, on this point, my opinion remains unchanged. But here to make a change means to make a change

in the Statute (\*). Now I have no prejudices on this score, as I said yesterday to an honourable member (Sig. Gambarotta); but I agree with him that to touch the Fundamental Law, unless on the ground of necessity and by merely temporary measures as was our case yesterday, is to do that which should be done only when the public mind is thoroughly ripe for it.

As to the vote to women, in that juvenile book of mine I was opposed to it: but on this point I have come to change my opinion (*Laughter.*)

And yet after all, it is not I who have changed my opinion: it is the times that have changed; the times and the way too of looking at the question.

As I said yesterday, I have never, either then or now, considered the franchise as a sort of simple, after the manner of the Jacobin encyclopædia of the eighteenth century, in other words, as a form of transfer of powers, those initial powers inherent in man in a free state of nature, which then pass by means of a vote to delegates or representatives, who upon this meet in assembly and in their turn divest themselves of these powers, investing with them anew a smaller assembly of persons who become thus in their turn representatives.

I do not believe (I said so yesterday, and this is assuredly not the time for abstract discussions of the kind), — I do not believe in these theories. I do not believe that to give a vote is something inherently linked with the attributes of Humanity, a primordial and natural right. And therefore I did not believe then, and I do not believe now, like the thorough-going champions of Women's Rights, the suffragettes *à outrance*, that the denial of the right to vote is equivalent almost to the non-recognition of the essential right inherent in the individual.

I have heard people say that to deny the franchise means, to make woman a slave: all this I did not

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(\*) The fundamental «Statuto» of the Italian Constitution.

believe then and I do not believe now. But I believed then and I believe now that by means of representative institutions, which find their full expression in the manifestation of opinion through the electoral vote, is carried on the encounter within the State of individual and class interests, which find therein their pacific palestra; so that all there is of truth in the theories of Socialism finds, in my opinion, and should find its equivalent expression in this encounter, this strife if you will, of classes and interests so intertwined with one another, which must needs be welded together into a single organism.

Now such a welding force is above all the representative system, with its electorate, its political assemblies, and so forth.

Well, thirty six years ago, I failed to recognize in the admission of women to the electorate, political and administrative, a social principle *per se*, an essential embodiment, so to speak, of social interests intimately bound up with the work of women in the world and therefore demanding their due form of defence, represented by the electoral voting-paper.

The woman of the patriarchal type — (and here I know no repentance, here I remain a reactionary of the reactionaries; for there to forbid all renunciation, there is one's mother ever before one, gazing at one from beneath her aureole of silver hair), (*Hear, hear*) — this archaic figure of the woman hermetically sealed up within her family circle had no need of the franchise; she had no social or economic interests demanding the specific form of protection the franchise confers.

Her vote was absorbed, if she was mother, in her son's, if she was daughter, in her father's, if she was wife, in her husband's. (*Hear, hear!*) But now, now when under the pressure of a social evolution ever more intense, we have the social phenomenon of female labour, of a contribution in that field ever more direct, of the transfiguration, with ever

swifter speed, of that which I have termed the patriarchal type of woman, her who was content to sit and spin her wool at home; now that to the phalanxes of working-men are added phalanxes of working-women, now that as in a forcing-house under tropical heat all this has been multiplied on such a gigantic scale owing to the pressing needs of the war; — now I say I have changed my opinion. And I do not believe that any one will for this lay fickleness of character to my charge. (*Loud cheers.*)

But are we now ripe for the definite acceptance, straight off, of this new principle as to the franchise? Here come in a number of definite, practical questions, certainly not insuperable, but still requiring the most careful examination and the ripest decision. For instance are we to give the vote to women precisely in the same measure as it has been given to men?

Signor MODIGLIANI — Yes.

The PRIME MINISTER — The honourable member says « Yes »; but others might observe that this was a thing to be done by degrees, that the franchise has only gradually been won by men, and that the new system must have time given it to become familiar and to get itself into good working order in harmony with the rest of the Constitution. One may well, then, think of reasonable limits in any change proposed.

But what are these limits to be? A hard problem enough, abstractedly considered: but this is not all; for I who frankly and sincerely confess my perplexity before this problem (and no one will be surprised if I say that I have not had too much time to consider it), — I recognise that the day when the principle of female suffrage is admitted, will bring with it the necessity of an extension of the franchise which will place women in that respect nearly on an equality with men, or else the equilibrium between the various classes of society will be disturbed. I would have the House, then, realize the very grave difficulties of the question; and I ask the House now after what I have

said on this head, whether it finds itself in a position to face all these difficulties, at a time like the present.

I shall not refer now to all the further questions of means and methods. I have no recollection at this moment of what my opinions were on these points in those past days. I believe I have altogether forgotten them. *Scrutin de liste*, for instance? And if so, then *scrutin de liste* with the candidates grouped in a constituency created *pro hac vice* or *scrutin de liste* by provinces or districts, and then besides, all the venerable interminable company of all the various methods of proportional representation.

Well, as to this last, some are for it and some against it. I for my part, am inclined to the second of these opinions. It seems to me that it is better not to sophisticate the franchise by chemical or alchemic operations: — but still these are opinions worthy of all respect; and they would bring with them the mechanism for limitation, the limited vote or the cumulative vote, or the so-called proportional methods in the strictest sense of the term, and hence the system of the so-called concurrent lists.

Now, on this grave argument I do not believe that the House can come to a decision to-day. There are things one cannot prove; one feels them or one does not. Well, then, it is best that they should not be prejudged. Even those questions as to which I am without anything like sympathy or consent or approval, even these I really believe should not be prejudged by a hasty vote. I should like, then, to beg honourable members, beforehand, those, I mean, who have signified a their intention of speaking, — well, of course, I understand that it would be presuming too far to beg them to refrain from explaining their views, — but I should like to beg them to refrain from ending with a formal motion. At all events I should be glad if the vote of the House took such a form as to leave all these questions perfectly open.

But it may be said: « Why then have you brought



in this Bill? » Well, the answer is easy. If I wanted reasons, I might remind you that at bottom it is but a temporary enactment, which in no way infringes the principle of our electoral law, that it is a measure the practical effect of which will probably be sufficiently limited; (*Interruption by Sig. Giacomo Ferri;*) — but there is such a lofty significance in it, such a symbolic meaning, that it had only to be laid before us, and the Government on the one hand and the House on the other could not but accept it. (*Loud cheers, mingled with varied comments.*)

## AT THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION OF WORK IN AID OF THE COMBATANTS

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*At Palazzo Chigi.. Rome; May 21st, 1918*

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« Citizens and soldiers, be one sole army ! » — Thus, dreadless in the hour of supreme danger, did the word of the king of Italy summarize with the laconism of a sculptured scroll the most comprehensive truth, the most absolute precept, that flashes forth to us from the present war. This war is waged no less than in the trenches, in the workshops of our industries and in the laboured fields of our land: — it is waged in every act of ours and every utterance; through our words and through our silence; in the streets and squares alike of our great cities and of our humblest villages; in public assemblies and within the privacy of the walls that ring round the home in palace or in hovel.

And of this perfect fusion between the army and the civilian population, the form at once most symbolic and most tangible is presented by the work of civilian aid, in which is affirmed the duty of solidarity between the Motherland and those who are fighting, suffering, dying for her.

### **The two solidarities.**

There is, without doubt, a conception of human and social solidarity of which it is the boast of

modern times to have revealed all the esoteric and profound meaning, as being that law ideal which harmonizes and brings into brotherhood all the energies of the individuals composing the social group, and to the principle «each for all» links as its necessary and legitimate complement that other principle, «all for each». Though indeed, to my mind, between these two solidarities, which might well be termed, the one the solidarity of *peace*, the other that of *war*, lie differences so profound as even to transform their essence. Looked at from the territorial point of view, what I would term the solidarity of peace presents itself to us as those concentric circles we have all when children gazed wonderingly at, which starting one might say from a point, go on to widen out without end. For in such wise it is that the sentiment of solidarity, taking its rise in the little family group, beneath one roof lodged and sheltered, widens out then symmetrically to embrace first native town and then province and region, reaching so the Fatherland, but pausing not there but rather seeking out affinities of race, spiritual ties with peoples far away, to arrive at last at Humanity.

Nor to local relations, various as they are, is limited the tie that links man to man. It is as multiform as the innumerable aspects of the spirit of man and his interests. And hence we have solidarity of this and that class of society, of religious faiths, of political principles, of scientific thought, and so on without end. This is the solidarity of peace. The solidarity of war, on the other hand, is one not many, simple not complex.

It restrains, may we not even say annuls, the intermediate forms between the individual and the Fatherland: it passes not beyond the Fatherland, if it be not to link itself with the peoples in union with us in the vast strife. It is no family affection, or municipal, or provincial: the pang we knew in heart for Udine in its invasion is a sentiment that admits not of comparisons: such was it, that it could have

been no greater, had the calamity smitten our own mother city.

Young men, before whom life is opening out as a longing for independence, and old men who could have known no peace in the tomb the heel of the foreigner trampled, believers and unbelievers, workmen and manufacturers, land-owners and labourers, men of thought and men of action, we all have equally this common motive for existence, — to be free citizens in a free Fatherland. We all feel that safety for us there cannot be, without the safety of the Fatherland.

Even the most insensible of men and the hardest must feel in the mysterious depths of the soul a sense, so to speak, of lurking menace, a sanction of inexorable vengeance, against every sentiment, not merely of egoism and of avarice, but even of absence and indifference, in the presence of the great common cause.

### **The importance of the Exhibition.**

For our good fortune and to our honour, so exceptional that they may be left out of the reckoning are those who have to render such a bitter account to their own conscience. This Exhibition is the tangible proof, the triumphant demonstration, of the full, whole-hearted union of spirit and energy and will and work between the people and the army. The army fights for the people: the people labours for the army. This Exhibition is, so to speak, a military muster of the work of the civilian population. It demonstrates how wondrously this great and heroic people of ours has fought its battle. Our detractors, animated (for, frankly, so it is) by that pestilent spirit that is ours of self-criticism, doubted whether the springs of our enthusiasm, which sprang forth with such fervid energy at the beginning of the war, would later on preserve sufficient elasticity to feed the movement of all the complex mechanism of civilian aid during a war that is being prolonged beyond all prevision, all calcula-

tion — I was almost going to say beyond all possibility other than paradoxical. It will be all very well for the first five or six months, people thought: then this term was prolonged by those sinister prophets, the pessimists, after the manner of the usurers, with the very briefest extension of credit. But if the credit opened on the generosity and the spirit of solidarity of the people of Italy in favour of its soldiers has had to be prolonged from month to month, that people has bravely done honour to its engagements; and while many, very many, in the May of 1915, did not believe we could go on much beyond the end of that year, we have seen pass away one by one all the twelve months of 1917, and find ourselves now, in this spring that ushers in the fourth year of war, with all our enthusiasm inexhausted, and may without boasting but still without false modesty offer to view this display of the wonderful and manifold organized work of aid we have devoted to the service of the war.

### **An August Will.**

The will of an August Personage has conceived this Exhibition and fashioned it, has personally directed it, too, and brought it to completion, with that calm and efficient steadfastness which now makes every Italian almost instinctively link the name and presence of his Queen with every useful and good work. And this, Your Majesty, you have willed, because you felt and knew that this was not one of the many shows of vanity, was no mere occasion for alms-begging and winning in the sight of the public an adjective of praise or a smile from the powers that be; but that rather it aimed at being and is, in the very height of a most terrible war, the proof and the glorification of that profound and radiant Italian and Latin virtue ours, that cannot be purchased at pleasure, that does not work for ostentation, that multiplies itself in danger, that blazes forth and glows and gleams the

more beneath the weight of adversity. The rooms we are about to pass through will bear witness to us of the vast work, often unknown and too little valued, which there has been need to do, in order to prepare, to discipline, to refine the various forms of aid to be rendered; they will remind us of the prodigies of abnegation, of liberality, of charity, of which Italy, rich and poor, far and near, has shown herself capable. These rooms will make us realize the variety, the profusion, the sagacious adaptability to all demands, with which even in the very smallest towns of Italy, from Lombardy to Sicily, from Piedmont to Apulia, rose by the hundred thousand the volunteers, male and female, of this army of charity, this army which was not content to remain behind the army in the field, which did not confine its care to the child, the woman, the aged, but mingled itself with the army, went with it under the fire of the enemy to dangers and to hardships perilous as the dangers, tended it, saved it, comforted it, gave it new life, and never rested till it saw even in the heart and on the face of the mutilated return once more the smile of faith, faith in the Fatherland eternal and omnipotent, and what is more difficult, faith, spite all, in himself.

Yes, now the Italian soldier, who is fighting to reconquer, aye and to conquer, all Italy for Italy, and to give liberty to all the world that of liberty is worthy, knows thanks to you that his country does not forsake him in danger, does not forsake him in sorrow, does not forsake him even after death, since she makes provision for his family rendered consecrate by his sacrifice.

He, on the mountains and on the rivers where he has stayed the foe, has learnt now to give form and voice to this Fatherland of ours that is behind him; and that not alone the voice and the form of his children, his wife, his mother, his family; nay, it is the form, the voice of the pious women he has seen around his bed when he was sick or wounded, of all

the men of science and of loving-kindness who have tended and saved him and his comrades, of all those who have been given to speak to him in the name of Italy.

This vast and enduring work, Your Majesty, Your Royal Highnesses, ladies and gentlemen, this work of yours has in such wise verily created the new Italy, unanimous and disciplined, under the banners of her bounty and of civilisation. The army has defended her and defends, has made her, and will maintain her mighty and respected. You have given her the consciousness of her purity and of her moral unity.

This work of yours must not end with the war. It must not even repose a moment's space at the peace. To-day you are pressing forward to restore, to tend, to heal the wounded, sick or o'erwearied soldier. To-morrow, after the victory, your task must be to restore, to tend, to heal our Italy. The tempest has been tremendous. The work of reconstruction will be immense. See that the lesson we have learnt be not lost on us. Loose not the fast-bound energies: break the linked staves never more. Then for this reason, too, we shall say that the war has not been in vain, that from the horrors, from the sorrows, from the dread strife that has been ours from it, shall spring up the great harvest we await, for the which good was the seed and true the toil that nurtured it.

That harvest will be reaped by our sons, who stand revealed nobler than we, — reaped for the new fortunes, the new glories of Italy immortal throughout the ages. (*Loud cheers.*)

## AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE STANDARD OF BATTLE TO THE CZECHO-SLOVAK LEGION

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*At the Altar of the Fatherland, Rome, May 24th, 1918*

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The souls of all the free nations are stirred this day more passionately and profoundly, since there is not one of us who does not feel that the decisive hour is drawing nigh when the destinies of humanity will shine forth in the light of a new civilisation, won with blood at the price of unheard-of sacrifices, of heroic renunciations.

In this hour of fulgent glory and of epic hopes, the banner, the most sacred sign of the honour and independence of a free country, — the banner of the Bohemia of to-morrow waves for the first time beneath the sun of Rome, on the altar Italy at the foot of the Capitol has raised to the deathless memory of her prophets, her martyrs, and her warriors. Great is my fortune, great my honour, this day, to be given to offer to the standard of Bohemia, at its baptism, the salute of Italy. And if this baptism has place far from the Fatherland, assuredly it could not be more solemn or more august. Rome augurs it victory: Italy blesses it on her own altar: and its vigilant sponsors are the mighty shades of the heroes of our New Birth as a Nation, Victor Emmanuel II and Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi.

This rite is the sure augury of the birth of a people. Nay, of more than that and better, its re-



birth. For your ancestors, soldiers of free Bohemia, were for more than five centuries a nation free, great, glorious; till strained and stifled between the German people and the Hungarian, they had to endure the oppression of both. It is a rebirth, I repeat, this of yours, and by it is revealed once again the ignominy of the guile through which the House of Hapsburg found the way to seize and hold you subjected. But against this ignominy the soul of Bohemia, inflexible, inexorable, has ever cried aloud its protest; and here to-day she once more asserts the sanctity of the right and the duty to rise up against it.

Meantime, while in Prague they proclaim the state of siege, in Rome we baptise the Czecho-Slovak banner. In Bohemia they cry « Hurrah for Italy », and from Italy we make answer in no less fraternal utterance: « Hurrah for Bohemia! ».

*(The last words of Signor Orlando are greeted with a manifestation of approbation and of faith which no one present will ever forget: even the Ministers and Ambassadors clap their hands; there are loud cries of « Hurrah for Bohemia! » Hurrah for Italy »!*

*At this moment high in the air above the monument passes a squadron of allied aeroplanes. As soon as they are seen by the crowd, the enthusiastic applause breaks out once more, and is continued till Colonel Stefanik advances to hand the banner to the General in command of the Czecho-Slovak Division.*

*The Czecho-Slovak soldiers fall on their knees before their flag. The officers kiss it. The hearts of all present are stirred with profound emotion).*

## ON THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF ITALY'S DECLARATION OF WAR

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*At the Augusteum, Rome, May 24th, 1918*

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Never in all the long centuries of her story was the soul of Rome made to burn with pride as now, in hearing the words of greeting, of ardour and of faith, addressed to her by the representatives of the peoples allied with her, firmly linked with Italy in a strife to which the history of the world can show no parallel. Never, even when she thrust farthest forth the borders of her Empire, so as to include within it wellnigh all the civilised world, had Rome offered her a homage from the Nations greater than to-day's: never greater, because it comes to her now both from the Old World and the New, never greater, above all, because it comes to her now from the peoples that are free. I cannot play the part of modest deprecation here: rather do I affirm with pride that, great as is this homage, immense as is its meaning, Italy is worthy to receive it. (*Loud cheers.*) And when I say she is assuredly worthy of it, I am not thinking merely of the war she has fought in with fidelity and with honour, and of the contribution of effort and of pain, of privations and of sacrifices she has made to the common cause, so that she has known all, all the horrors of this war, — her sons fallen by thousands on the field of battle, all her substance offered with lavish generosity, her women

and her children slaughtered by the foul aggression that pollutes the heavens or sunk beneath the sea by the subtle snare of the submarine, her cities bombarded, her monuments destroyed or menaced, two of her most glorious provinces invaded and trampled down by the foe. (*Cheers.*) Italy has suffered all that could be devised by the diabolic art of those who have known how to invent the phrase «the joy of injuring», while we Latins have invented rather the phrase, «the joy of living». All this we call to mind, not as one who exposes his sores to view to excite a benevolent compassion, but with the lofty pride of the wounded and maimed in war, whose scars are as a glorious decoration graven in his flesh: (*Loud Cheers*): — we call it all to mind with the invincible faith of one who knows that blessed are they who have suffered in a cause that is just. But we know no less for this, that in this war, which has witnessed the most horrible deeds and the fairest that history has to tell, a generous emulation in sacrifice among the peoples combating beneath the banner of the *Entente* makes each of them see and appreciate the sufferings of the rest before its own. Why, to say nothing of the rest, have we not with us here to-day the representative of Belgium, of that people martyr to the idea of independence and of honour? (*Cheers*).

### The moral beauty of our intervention.

No, when I said that Italy is worthy of this impassioned homage from all the civilized peoples, I had in my mind rather the lofty moral beauty of the act by which she freely and voluntarily chose the path of sacrifice, though then for long months had endured the enervating influence of the slaughter and horrors of the war, and the dread conflict seemed to be nearing its climax with no fair omen assuredly to the fortunes of the *Entente*: — the moral beauty of that act of hers, I repeat; for her decision to enter

into the war came more than from all else from the goad of a great sentiment, through which the soul of the Italian was caught and held by the fascination of a generous idealism. And as this moral sentiment determined her magnanimous resolution at the beginning of the war, so it has remained enthroned throughout its whole course; — nay, it has been ever more and more refined, more and more purified in the furnace of the formidable strife; so that, after three years of war, after the unmerited disaster of Caporetto, you, my friends, assembled here from all quarters, will be able to attest that you have found an Italy assuredly somewhat different from the Italy of yore, whose charms of nature and of art were wooed by the dreamer, the poet and the lover, an Italy rendered more austere in the hard and wholesome school of sorrow, but an Italy firm on her feet, fired by the same fervour, by the same enthusiasm, by the same faith, as when in the May of 1915 she proclaimed herself in state of war. (*Cheers.*)

This war of hers, when it was thus declared, seemed as it were but the continuation of the wars of our New Birth as a Nation, Our people realised that they were fighting once more for their unity, for their independence, for their brothers of the same tongue, of the same blood, of the same soul, groaning still beneath that insupportable yoke which crushes down and stifles the loftiest aspirations of the noblest of peoples; — that they were fighting to win less unfair frontiers, which might insure their existence against the age-long menace that seemed to lie there ever lurking in ambush for us in the mountains and in the sea.

### **The rights of the free peoples.**

But in the course of these three years of war, a month of which has often had the decisive import of centuries of story, Italy has come to realise that

particular aspirations, even the justest, national claims, even the most holy, become but as episodes in this gigantic conflict, in which we seem to be fighting less for this or that people than for all Humanity, less for the existence of any one nation than for the future and the fate of the World. (*Cheers.*)

And so in these two words, in which is summed up all that is most generous, all that is most glorious, in the history of the generations of Man, in these two marvellous, magical words, — Justice and Liberty — is found the essential, the profound reason for this common war of ours, in them has its root our aspiration after a victory, which will be and must be common. (*Cheers.*)

The messages of President Wilson (*Loud cheers*), in their terse limpidity, have flashed as it were a ray of light over the noble universality of the objects of our war. They have succeeded in condensing into a precise expression, into a categorical formula, what we were every day more surely coming to realise, with the clearness of insight which sorrow confers on Man. And we have thus been able to establish the universal truth, wide as Humanity itself, which rises above our national aims; happy indeed in this, that these national aims of ours are in accordance with those high verities and square most perfectly with them.

And just as we have risen to this universal conception, starting from an idea special to ourselves, so, on the other hand, from this dominating principle we pass down once more to our national ideals to find them but its natural deduction. The right of Trieste is based on the same verity and on the same justice as the right of Strasburg; just as the right of Trieste and of Strasburg is based on the same essential foundation as the right of Warsaw or of Prague. (*Loud cheers.*)

## The desperate efforts of the enemy.

We know full well all the gravity of the hour, all the greatness of the danger: we realise full well that, uniting all his reserves in men, all his vast resources in material, and all the accumulation of his hates and of his violence, the enemy is on the point of hurling himself against our allies and against us with the awful force of desperation. We know that the will of the enemy, even more than our own, has made of this war a matter of life and death for the nations; for if in his speech at Hamburg, the Kaiser declared that Germany is ready to take the hand extended to her by an enemy vanquished and humbled, the so-called Peace or series of Peaces with Russia and the Peace of Bucharest, forced upon the noble, basely betrayed Roumania (*Loud cheers*), have made even that modern St. Thomas, the Peace Party, understand that Germany is ready not only to take the conquered by the hand, but... by the throat. (*The Prime Minister accompanies these last words of his with a lively gesture, exciting loud and prolonged cheers.*)

Our enemies have placed before us such an inexorable alternative, that if the decisive duel is fated to end with the total ruin of our peoples, it would still be better to fall gloriously with our face to the foe, (*Loud and prolonged cheers. The whole audience rises to its feet, applauding amid the greatest excitement*), — rather than to save our lives at the price of slavery and dishonour. But equal to our grand idea is the faith that animates and sustains us, so that spite all the inevitable weaknesses, spite all the possible calamities, spite all the tremendous sacrifices, we feel that there is more force in this idea than in all the brutal violence of our enemy. No violence has ever availed to stifle the ideas that have arisen great, august, decisive in the world's history. It is they that are the true, the sole conquerors.

And out of this cataclysm, by reason of which it may be said that all Humanity sorrows and weeps, will arise a greater age; and it will not be that the enemy dreamed of in his foolish dream of universal dominion. Over all the various peoples, great and small, but all alike equal, all alike free, one sole Empire there will be and there must, — the Empire of Justice. (*Cheers.*)

We have pledged ourselves to this: we have sanctified our pledge with the generous blood of innumerable heroes and with the rude sufferings of whole peoples: all this will not be in vain. Linked together in the war by a solemn pact of life and death for the most essential, the loftiest ends, vital for the existence of our peoples, after the war we shall not violate that pact. From our victory will come peace, from our peace the justice and the liberty of the world.

Your Royal Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen, —

I am reminded as I stand here, of two episodes, whose profound significance seems to me to sum up the sentiments that animate this never-to-be-forgotten assembly.

Yesterday I saw a young man in whose blue eyes were reflected in all its limpid brightness the soul of an ancient people, of that England whence arose the moral philosophy of benevolence and of sympathy, and the economic philosophy which in proclaiming the principles of the Manchester School followed up the assertion of the principle of free competition by the imperative, — «Fair play!»

I asked that young man whence he came, and his answer was: — «From the Tableland of Asiago», and he added: «I have been there six months».

That young man is the Heir of the greatest Empire in the World; and with sublime singleness of heart he has come to share in our trials and in our dangers, and has willed to have part in the defence of our Land, upon our Alps. — Your Royal High-

ness, we Italians will never forget it. (*Loud cheers. All risè: the band strikes up the English National Anthem*).

And this episode is linked in my mind with another. It was during the terrible days with which the November of 1917 began, when it needed an almost superhuman faith not to despair. From an impulse of spontaneous, fraternal generosity, there came to us then here in Italy the heads of the Allied Governments, the Prime Minister of England and the President of the Council of Ministers of France. But speedily as they came to us, their coming had been anticipated by the battalions of France, whose starting to help us had begun twenty-four hours after the day of Caporetto: — and this too Italy will never forget. Well after our meeting at Rapallo we had gone off to the front, and we were halted at a small station, to let a train pass full of French troops. Great as might be our faith, the infinite anxiety of the hour weighed heavily upon us: the sky was veiled with clouds: nature like our hearts seemed shrouded in a vague and sinister gloom. The French were passing us troop after troop, with that gay serenity which makes them born soldiers, makes them feel themselves at home on all the battle-fields of the world, Their military decorum was not shaken by the sight of the Head of their Government, whose presence, indeed, at that moment and in that place, they were wholly unaware of. But all of a sudden from the top of one of the railway-carriages a youth — well, he was hardly more than a boy, — a little hero with a pale, thin face, but with sparkling eyes, recognized in M. Painlevé the Member for one of the Divisions of Paris, and standing suddenly at attention and raising his hand to his cap, he cried out in a loud voice, which broke the austere and gloomy silence, « Eh bien, M. le Président, voilà le Parisien! » (*Loud applause*.)

There was in that salute at the same time respect and a gaiety of fine temper, but above all there was



in it the heroic confidence of the youngster of the streets of Paris, of a typical representative of that wondrous France, which in its great cosmopolitan soul has quivered responsive to every high ideal, has lavished its aid on every noble cause, has shed its blood for the liberty of every people oppressed. Yes: «Voilà le Parisien!» Here is he who for centuries has had the habit of looking fate in the face, he who for centuries has gone to meet the danger, defying it, nay, I might almost say, insulting it, he who has disarmed adversity by opposing to it the mocking challenge of his wit, heroic as his very valour. (*Loud cheers, renewed again and again. All rise: the band strikes up the Marseillaise.*)

### The firm will of the *Entente*.

And while our own soldiers clad in their uniform of grey-green file before a French general on the tortured and glorious land of France amid the admiration of the «*poilus*», in the episodes I have just referred to, which link with the defence of Italy the young Heir of the British Crown and the little soldier of France, I seem to see a great symbolic meaning, a reassertion of the union that the hour and the danger ever more temper anew and strengthen, — the union which the firmer it becomes, the more renders us worthy of the victory and victorious over Destiny.

For this union, so solemnly reconsecrated here on this day destined by the Fates, I, in the name of Italy, express to all my fervid gratitude, — to England, that could not have sent us a messenger more noble or more welcome than you, Your Royal Highness, to bear us an august word, reaffirming the friendship between your Country and ours, a friendship that began in sorrowful days for us and has gone on ever strengthening in heart-felt affection in days of sorrow even more than in days of joy; — to France, to the great Sister of our Race, towards whom our hearts

and the hearts of all go out in renewed admiration in this epic hour, when on her territory is being decided the fate of the world; — to the United States of America, to that young people, mighty in force and even now rich in glory, by reason of the prophetic wisdom of its Chief and the manifold virtues of its men; — to the Peoples the enemy more easily crushed in their littleness, but whose sacrifice appears for that very reason more heroic and their courage more admirable; — to those Nations which, from the Baltic to the Adriatic, the common enemy oppresses the more, the more they oppose to him the invincible force of their consciousness of race, Nations oppressed even within the very confines of the hostile States, but who rise heroically in revolt with the cry « Hurrah for the *Entente* ! » — to all, in short, who are with us in thought and in action, in heart and in arms, aspiring in the brotherhood of to-day after a juster and worthier to-morrow, — Italy, through the mouth of Rome Immortal, makes answer in one burning word of gratitude, of union and of faith.

And let this our message of good augury be spread over all the world; and let our friends know, and our enemies too, that tenacious more than ever in the strife, faithful more than ever to their Allies, the whole people of Italy to-day as yesterday is ranged around its King, with one heart and one will: to resist and thereby to conquer, to conquer and thereby to live! (*Loud cheers, taken up again and again, amid a scene of the greatest enthusiasm.*)

## HERO IC BELGIUM

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*At the Grand Hotel, Rome, June 10th, 1918*

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Welcome, Gentlemen: I offer you here in Rome Italy's most heartfelt greeting. We could receive no visit more acceptable, more prized, more worthy our respectful homage than this visit of yours. To you our heart goes out not only in affection and admiration, but with all the warmth of gratitude. The history of Humanity, indeed, knows not a people that has greater right to the gratitude of the world than little Belgium, — Belgium that has shown in peace and still more in war what inestimable worth, what unquenchable energy emanates from the soul of a nation when it is inspired by the light of noble sentiment and inflamed by the exaltation of a magnanimous faith.

What, after all, is it on which is based this distinction between States or Peoples, of great and little? It is at the best absurdly conventional: or at all events he only can accept and justify it who can see nothing and admire nothing but the outer semblance of a brute mass. It is not the square miles of territory, the millions of inhabitants, that constitute the greatness of a people, any more than it is the weight of his body or the height of his stature that constitutes the greatness of an individual. It is the spirit that moves the mass and determines its resultant efficiency: *mens agitat molem*. Well, then, if we are to consider

States from the point of view of the multifarious manifestations of their energies in the furtherance of civilisation, Belgium may well be held to have been in the same line with the mightiest and most illustrious whether in territory or in advanced civilisation; — nay, in many fields she was in the van, foremost in foremost line.

But if in the pacific rivalry of the nations Belgium could be even greater than the rest, — when she rose up heroically against the crushing force of an overpowering invader, rose up in no ignorance of the terrible fate that awaited her, then this people seemed to tower giantlike over all peoples of the past and present and future and to fill with its heroic deed the whole horizon of the story of Humanity.

No word of mine could exalt higher the refulgent sacrifice of Belgium; that is beyond its power, beyond the power, may be, of any. But this one plain historical fact I am bound here to proclaim; — in the making of the resolution which impelled Italy, the great conflict in her moral being once overworn, to thrust herself with virile, generous energy into the tremendous strife, the example and the fate of Belgium were most certainly among the determining elements, nay perhaps the most decisive. In the very immensity of its ideal beauty, the deed Belgium had done was a warning to us that to a people no less than to an individual the supreme ideal is duty, the supreme law honour. When in days to come, we are in a position thoroughly to comprehend the inmost spiritual significance of this unprecedented cataclysm to Humanity, then, Gentlemen. I believe this war will be found to have been what one may term a gigantic episode in the struggle between the forces of Good and Evil; and it will be found too that all the virtues no less than all the sorrows inherent in the cause of Justice are intermingled as in a centre of heat and light, as in a Polar Star, in martyred Belgium.

Before her sacrifice, the spirit of Humanity,

throughout the ages, will bend low, overcome by the charm that emanates from things holy and august. If men ask then where we are to find the impersonification of military honour, History will reply by naming General Leman, who buried Liège beneath her ruins. If they ask of what are moulded the faith and devotion of a people to justice, History will point to the smoking ruins of Dinant, of Termonde, of Louvain, of Ypres: answer will be given by the tragic cries of pain of hundreds of defenceless victims, subjected to the most refined cruelties by their tormentors. If they ask what it means, the heroic firmness that suffers and combats and waits its hour, History will reply — « Belgium ».

Gentlemen, one of those sovereign intellects that have most crowned human thought with honour, has told us that it is a crime in the sight of universal morality for a larger State to use its power to crush a smaller. even if it be prompted so to act by reasons of self-preservation; and he added that the injustice of the act was to be measured not a whit by the greater or less importance of the motives that prompted this injustice. There is nothing strange, nothing extraordinary in this idea: I quote it merely because it was enunciated by a German, though a German of well-proved Scotch descent, Emanuel Kant. *Deutschtum*, most assuredly, will violently repudiate the great philosopher here, while reserving to herself the production, when difficult days draw near to her, of the Kantian « plan for a perpetual peace », held for a season in reserve alongside the principles of the International Karl Marx.

But for the present, while the bombs of the aeroplanes are making their victims on land from defenceless women and children, and the pirate submarines are making their victims on sea, the most genuine representative of the German spirit, though little known and still less worthy to be, is an Evangelical pastor, the Reverend Fritz Philipp, who in a sermon at Berlin

on the divine mission of Germany, made the following declaration: — « Like as God Omnipotent suffered « His Son to be crucified that the work of Redemption « might thereby be complete: even so is Germany « destined to crucify Humanity to win for it salvation ». And true it is that Belgium has had her Passion and her Crucifixion. Only she has refused to recognize in her crucifier the « Father ». Rather has her desperate appeal been heard and answered by the free and civilized peoples throughout the world, for whom Belgium is the shining symbol, the honoured ensign, in the gigantic strife that is being waged, and this because the liberation of Belgium means the liberation of the world, because her resurrection will be the Easter Morn of resurrection of all that is of highest worth to all men.

This is our fervent prayer; this our sure and firm faith. I drink and call on you to drink to the glory of Belgium, who rising from her smoking ruins and healing her bleeding wounds, will resume still more noble and great than in the past her mission of civilizing energy, her admirable part in the history of the world, — to King Albert, whose name sounds beloved and venerated in every generous heart and will attain with time an epic glory, as the symbol of the highest virtues of a ruler of a State, — finally to the whole Belgian people, which now from its heroism and its martyrdom is as a second fatherland to all who long for and make appeal to Liberty, to Justice and to Peace throughout the world. (*Loud cheers.*)

## THE GREAT AUSTRIAN OFFENSIVE.

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies; June 15th, 1918.*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council (*rising amid signs of the profoundest attention*). — I beg to inform the House that last night the enemy commenced his great offensive. Almost all our front is engaged, as the offensive extends, with extreme violence everywhere, from the Astico to the Brenta, from the Brenta to the Piave, and all along the Piave; so that the struggle is going on upon the tableland of Asiago, in the region of the Grappa, and in the plain.

A furious bombardment began at three o'clock last night, and at seven this morning the infantry attacked all along the line.

The last news I have, which gives the situation at one o'clock to-day, is to the effect that our troops have everywhere resisted magnificently. (*Loud, general, and prolonged cheers which are taken up in the Galleries. Cries of « Hurrah for Italy! » « Hurrah for the Army! »*).

The situation is so serious, the attack being so determined, that anything like boasting would be out of harmony with that sense of measure and of dignity, which is one of the hall-marks of our race (*Loud cries of « Hear, Hear! »*).

This much, however, is certain: — that first effect has been wanting; which is wont to follow these lightning-swift offensives. (*Cheers.*)

The phonogram I have received, which summarizes the situation at one o'clock, concludes as follows: — « From all the information received, it is clear, then, that the action is confined almost entirely to the first line of resistance, and that not even at the few exceptional points above-mentioned the enemy has been able to produce the effect he had reason to hope for from the heavy bombardment and the enormous bodies of troops launched to the attack, against whom our troops are resisting magnificently. » (*Loud and general applause.*)

So much I have thought it right to communicate to the House. And the House will receive it with the serenity worthy of the Assembly that has the honour to represent so great a people (*Loud cheers*), — with serenity based on the confidence inspired in us by the sagacity of our General, who is as sagacious as he is modest (*Loud cheers*), and by the valour of our beloved soldiers, of whose valour above all, of whose honour, and of whose fidelity it is my boast never to have doubted. (*Loud, unanimous and prolonged applause, breaking out again and again, and taken up in the galleries. Cheers for the Army and for Italy.*)



## WHILE THE BATTLE RAGES ON THE PIAVE

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies; June 16th, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council — Those honourable members who have called the attention of the House to question of grave importance, no doubt, but of more or less general nature, will appreciate my reason and therefore excuse me, if I have to refrain from addressing to each of them a special reply.

I may say in general, — (and this is no mere formal expression of Parliamentary courtesy, I say it in all sincerity and earnestness), — that all the arguments laid before us, all the ideas embodied in the various Resolutions submitted to the House, have been welcomed by the Government as suggestions of the highest authority.

And to refer more particularly to one or two matters of special and exceptional importance, I may assure my honourable friend, Signor Pala, that I am entirely at one with my right honourable friend, the Minister of the Treasury, in all that he said yesterday in reference to our Sardinia.

When I saw those soldiers of the Sassari brigade and called to mind their epic glories in this war, I felt that I could go on my knees before them. Italy has incurred a heavy debt of gratitude to the noble island: this debt she ought to pay and she will.

My honourable friend, Signor Peano, and other speakers too, have referred to a matter which makes our hearts sad enough: – the care of our prisoners in the hands of the enemy.

I assure my honourable friend that this matter is always foremost in my mind and heart. We have taken active measures, and are taking them still, to alleviate the most sorrowful fate of these our brethren. My right honourable friend, Signor Bissolati, has already made some communications to the House on this head. These communications I confirm, and I may add, as to the agreement made at Berne, that the Cabinet is hastening on its ratification.

In answer to my honourable friend, Signor Arca, I should like to say that there has been no change whatever in the policy of the Government as to the oppressed and suffering nationalities under the sway of Austria-Hungary. On this head, clear and explicit declarations have been made by me both before this House and outside its walls. On this question the Government has not changed its opinions, as my honourable friend, Signor Labriola, supposed.

It is the situation that has changed, and if this were the hour to speak, I could show the House that a new phase in story has opened up for the whole tremendous problem of the Slav races, owing to the shattering of the Empire of the Czar, which has also fundamentally altered the point of view of the Italian people. Speaking as I do at the hour when the Czech legions are passing in review before His Majesty the King of Italy and are fighting by our side, at the hour when the other nationalities, the Jugo-Slav and the Roumanian, are preparing, begging, imploring, to fight where we fight, it is needless for me to say what are the guiding lines here of our policy.

We make this no question of war-aims, words without substance, vulgar vain-glorying, if not something worse than this, imposture, in an hour so tragic as that which now weighs on Humanity: what we

say to these nationalities, loyally, plainly, is this: — the victory of the *Entente* will be your victory; our unity is born of the facts we face together; we shall conquer and you will conquer with us. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

And I can reassure my honourable friend, Signor Gortani, as regards all that concerns the welfare of our brethren in the provinces severed from us by the line now held by the enemy. I am at this very moment engaged in considering how best to supply them with provisions so as to secure that these provisions serve for their sustenance and not for the enemy's. (*Hear, hear!*)

### It is history that is in the making.

But the House will of course understand the reasons why I cannot enter into details. Remember what an honourable member (Sig. Turati) told us just now, in words whose frankness equalled the nobility of the sentiments they expressed: — yes, an assembly can and ought to be calm, serene; and ours here in Italy has been so and is; but it does not believe it necessary to put on a mask of severity or take to itself a hypocrisy of serenity.

The Italian Chamber of Deputies does not show it is insensible to lofty sentiment or to the grandeur of the hour and of its mission, if it recognizes also the *gravity* of the hour and if it lets the world see that the gravity of the hour so absorbs us, so demands the sum of all our spiritual and moral energies for the one sole end of the salvation of our Country, that it would be hypocrisy if the House lingered over any other argument that is not this. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

It would be hypocrisy. The honourable member (Sig. Turati) told us so just now in words that were so lofty and so noble: — it is history that is in the making, Gentlemen.

What is the worth of recrimination, what is the worth of the fixing of responsibility, the « *He was wrong* » and « *He was right* », at an hour like this? The calm historian of these great events will most assuredly have to recognize that they have come upon Humanity as the Book of Revelation foretells the Day of Judgment is to come, « *sicut fur* », as a thief in the night, all suddenly.

No one, no one can come here and boast of having foreseen this or that. Let the faults and the blunders have been what they may, the fact is simple, the fact is horrible.

We are fighting now for the salvation of our Country, but we are fighting too for the destinies of Humanity, which depend perhaps — nay, there is no perhaps, — on the result of this terrible battle now raging: for do not let us abandon ourselves to a facile optimism; we are struggling against an enemy that has unchained against us all the violence of his force and of his hate, an enemy who knows the peril he himself is in, an enemy who has against us a numerical superiority and who will not easily loose his hold. Well, in this gigantic strife, on which, beyond the fate of our Fatherland, may depend the fate of all Humanity, what other course is left us save to reduce even duty to its simplest, most categoric, most decisive form: to face the danger with all our soul and with all our might, as our soldiers teach us to face it? For at this hour our soldiers are present here, and are to us the greatest and most glorious of exemplars. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

It is our Country that is standing on her defence. It is no mere spasm of rhetoric, the sentiment that stirs us at this thought. Only the man of vulgar soul can fail to realize the profound link that binds together will and thought. It is our country, my friends, that is in question here; and that is something which does not depend on our reasoning, or on our science, that does not depend on our preferences, that

does not depend on our pacts; it is something that has its seat in the soul; our country, we feel it in the blood that flows in our veins, we feel it in the sensibilities that form our consciousness; we may profess whatever political creed, whatever religious faith you will, touch our Country and you touch the very inmost essence of our being. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

But our political party, the views we hold, our religious confession, the class to which we belong? Our religious confession, — at an hour when very likely a stretcher-bearer who was a seminary priest is risking his life to bear away from the bloodstained field a republican maybe, or an atheist! The class to which we belong, when the peasant, as happens so often, is covering with his body the officer, who is the squire or the manufacturer; when the officer, as no less happens so often, is voluntarily going to meet his death, that it may be an example and a spur to his men! (*Cheers.*) How can we dream of asking questions about the political party, the distinctions between man and man, between class and class, in these hours when the blood of all is mingling in one stream? A mother's anxieties, a mother's tears differ not in kind, differ not in intensity, merely because the mother is the poorest woman amongst us or the greatest lady, (*Loud cheers.*)

It is this union of souls we have aimed at. An honourable member — (my honourable friend, Signor Labriola,) — has said, while speaking of me in all kindness and affection, « The Prime Minister is changed. » I am not changed. Much that is around me may have changed and may change still; but I have had one idea only from the day I was privileged to take part in the Government of the Country in such tragic hours, one sole idea and one sole aim, — to keep the forces of the country as far as possible united, (*Hear, hear!*), — to set my face to concord or at least avoid every act of discord. (*Cheers.*)

This has always been my aspiration: this has always been my ideal.

I once more at this hour make my profession of faith, a profession of faith linked indissolubly with the miracle wrought by our People, Remember the almost measureless abyss, into which the great catastrophe of the October of last year had cast down our People, Remember the terrible condition in which the army and the Country found themselves, and compare it with this magnificent resurrection of the whole Nation, with this magnificent assertion of one thought and one will; and we may make profession of faith with full consciousness of our deed.

### The « peace-offensive ».

At all events this I said, and here once more I repeat it. I said, and on a memorable occasion, let me tell the honourable member (Sig. Modigliani), when replying to that speech of his at the beginning of this session, that the Government would let no opportunity slip of obtaining a just and honourable peace. I assure the honourable member on my honour and on my conscience, — no such opportunity has ever been given me. Here, from this point of view, open diplomacy or secret diplomacy would mean precisely the same thing.

I declare, well knowing that the hour will come at no distant date when history by a refutation of my words might fasten upon me a truly terrible responsibility, aye, this notwithstanding, I declare that no possible opportunity, has ever, ever, been offered us of an honourable peace, since the hour when I had the honour first to occupy this place. And that peace-offensive to which the honourable member referred, why its very origin reveals its object and its end. It is the Pan-German newspapers that have described it to us with brutal frankness, stating (and the word tells its own tale) that it does the work of an « offensive », and

adding that it should lead at last to the hour when, France brought low and Italy brought low, the beaten enemy should be offered — (I am quoting from the *Kreuz Zeitung*,) — the beaten enemy should be offered the least possibly dishonouring capitulation.

Well, I said and I say again: — between the capitulation of a people and the end of its existence, I should prefer the end. (*Prolonged cheers.*)

### Caporetto will be avenged.

Our soldiers, gentlemen, have wrought a miracle: once in arresting the enemy on the Piave when no one thought it possible, and again when they resisted wonderfully, magnificently, an offensive backed by all the vast means his truly terrible mastery of technical appliance now places at the disposal of the enemy, whence, as usually happens in such cases, the thrusting back of the front for some kilometres was naturally to have been expected: — magnificently our soldiers have resisted and are resisting. I do not wish to keep repeating it; but my whole soul is wrapped up in the thought: — a few days more, and we shall have avenged Caporetto. (*Ministers and members spring to their feet. Loud and prolonged cheers, taken up by the occupants of the Galleries. Cries of « Hurrah for Italy! ».*)

And now, — the honourable gentleman (Sig. Turati) will observe, — the resolution I ask the House to approve is of the most classic and conventional type: — «That this House, after hearing the statements of the Government, hereby declares the debate adjourned to this day six months».

And I take this course because I wish to respond to his invitation to avoid anything, even a sentence, a word, that might make it difficult for this or that party to accept the resolution.

I can bear you witness. I willingly, gratefully

bear you witness, that you vote against the Government, when in this House we feel ourselves in verity united all of us, in our feeling that we are one with the Army, at the hour when it is fighting in defence of the Fatherland. (*Loud, general and prolonged cheers. Members crowd round the Prime Minister to offer him their congratulations.*)



## THE VICTORY OF THE PIAVE

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*Before the Senate, June 22nd, 1918.*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council. —  
Senators of Italy: —

The Italian army has, during the last few days, faced the most formidable attack to which it has been exposed since the commencement of the war. The coincidence, which is surely no mere accident, between the reduction of the breadration at Vienna and the beginning of the offensive against us, proves by what a law of iron necessity our enemy is fettered. And so the whole Austrian army, with all that is efficient in it reorganised and grouped in vast numbers in such wise as to eliminate or at least to hold in check the mutual bitterness that lurks in the hearts of the various races composing it, has at one and the same moment involved almost all our front for a hundred and twenty kilometres in the strife of one vast battle. And this shock our army has victoriously resisted. We may have to meet another attack, in the more or less near future; but meanwhile we have the right to claim and register our victory. (*Loud applause; all the Senators rising. Repeated cries, taken up also in the Galleries, of « Hurrah for the Army! Hurrah for Italy! »*).

## Victory !

If, in fact, one reflects on the gigantic means at the disposal of an offensive in grand style in these days, and on the numerical superiority of the enemy along the whole front attacked, so much so that at some points our soldiers had to resist a foe four times stronger and fighting always with valour and sometimes with the energy of desperation; it again, one reflects on the ambitious aims of the offensive, as they are revealed to us by official documents that have fallen into our hands, and then on the actual results it has attained, firmly, disastrously arrested as it has been in the mountain regions and able to gain ground but to the extent of one or two kilometres on the average in the region of the plains, — to the enemy, assuredly, this is more than an unsucccess, it is a defeat. (*Cheers*).

Wholly averse as we are from all fatuous elation and all presumption, we know well that other days of hard trial still await us, which we shall go to meet without boasting, animated by a faith that, for the very reason that it is profound and conscious, excludes all facile and preconceived optimism. But we can and ought to ascertain and establish, as historic verities, certain essential facts.

### The fairest, noblest of battles.

And in the first place, we ought to remove at once the erroneous impression, which would lead us to believe that our enemy's offensive on the tableland and on the Grappa, was nothing more than a great demonstration in force; an impression that might arise simply from the fact of the brief duration of that offensive. The truth is, on the contrary, that up there too the enemy hurled himself against us with no less violence than elsewhere; there too his objectives were no less gravely menacing, nay perhaps more menacing

still than elsewhere. But there the nature of the ground caused the battle to rage and wane in swifter rhythm, as though limited perforce to the time-unit of the older battles, — a single day. There were epic attacks and counter-attacks: the defence of Val Brenta, the strategic point of convergence of the enemy's efforts, aiming at the shattering our front, is worthy to find a place among the noblest of battles that have been lightning-swift and decisive. (*Cheers*).

And on that tableland of Asiago co-operated with the forces of Italy those of England and of France that are with us there; an Army of threefold nationality, that has fought with a harmony of mutual support, a fraternal fusion of energies and intents and tactical action, that could not be surpassed or wished greater in an Army purely national. (*Loud applause*.)

With this sole difference, perhaps; that still more intense glowed the flame of emulation, kindling, so to speak, a contest for a prize of valour, — a wondrous contest in which none of the three could overcome the rest, so equal was the tenacity in the resistance, the *élan* in the attack. (*Loud cheers*.)

### Monte Grappa, — a National monument.

And on the Grappa, — the Mountain of the Fatherland, — the enemy found facing it that ironhearted, unconquered Army that already after its proud retreat from the Cadore had succeeded in firmly barring his advance, amid difficulties that, even now, after so brief a space, when we look back on them, seem as legends. This time it has wrought as a spring of steel, of perfect temper; when pressed down it has sprung up as it were automatically and hurled back the foe, shattering him against the ravines and in the mountain vales. (*Cheers*). The legitimate pride of the General in command has expressed itself in this sole wish; that the glorious Mount, with its cyclopean works of defence, should be declared by the State a National Monument. And in

very sooth, more than marble arches and gilded statues the bare stones of the Grappa, sanctified by the blood of our heroes, are worthy to attest the valour of all our Army and to exalt its name throughout the ages. (*Lond cheers.*)

### **The heroic defenders of the Piave.**

But no less gratitude does our Country owe to the defenders of the Piave. Here, far different were the conditions of the conflict. The margin of a river that flowed in no full and unbroken volume, could not be held in force, without too surely condemning those who held it to extermination, exposed as they would be to the fire of barrage till their destruction. Why, we ourselves, with the very smallest detachments, passed the river almost daily, simply to annoy the enemy. The true line of defence, then, was necessarily somewhat farther back: and this line, after fierce contests with varying issue, has been most heroically maintained, while along much of the front, the enemy has not succeeded in driving us back even from the banks of the river. (*Lond cheers.*)

### **It is our soldier's victory.**

These wonderful results could not have been won, had there not been great warlike virtue in the individual soldier, and no less, in the army as a whole. It is the victory of our sturdy little soldier, who after three years of this terrible strife preserves unshaken in his soul all the enthusiasm of the earliest days of the national war, the same ardent bravery, the same spirit of sacrifice wrought above all of fealty to his Chief and to his Banner, fealty to this fair Land of ours, fertile and generous, whose blooming harvests I have but lately seen hiding the trenches and overgrowing the net-works of defence, as though to give our soldiers the most tangible proof that here their task is to de-

fend the soil that has given then life and living, the soil of Mother Italy.

*(The President of the Council pronounces these words with fire and with profound emotion. The Senators rise and cheer repeatedly, with cries of « Hurrah for Italy! Hurrah for the Army! » taken up in the Galleries).*

And the collective worth of the army is refulgent no less, viewed as one mighty organism, whose multiplex parts, delicate, complex, like a machine governed by one sole guiding will, energized by an intimate harmony of high intent and operation, tend under the influence of one sole force to one sole supreme end. He who, like me, has been privileged to witness with what admirable discipline and with what spontaneous precision all the organs obey the central will, cannot but have been thrilled with admiration for the illustrious Commander in Chief, who, in the silence of his arduous and assiduous daily labour, has been the army's strong and sure reorganizer, and is now its most able and prudent leader. *(Loud cheers).*

But above all, this vision of the one great military organism carries our thoughts to His Majesty the King, *(Enthusiastic cries, repeated again and again, of « Long live the King! » The Senators spring to their feet and burst into loud cheers, taken up also in the Galleries),* the great inspirer of our soldiers, whom he loves as his own sons, — the August Head of our Army, who is well worthy to be himself the exemplar of all its great and noble virtues. *(Loud and long-continued cheers.)*

### The daring deed of Luigi Rizzo.

Senators of Italy: —

Thus was vindicated on land the valour of the Italians: and meanwhile on the sea, ere the great echoes had died away of the heroic enterprise at Pola under Commander Pellegrini, another deed of war took place, and this time, in open fight. Volun-

tarily, in the open sea, a squadron of two of our smaller craft assailed the Austrian squadron, two super-dread-noughts and ten torpedo-boats strong. One at least of the two great ironclads was sunk, and the other and one of the torpedo-boats rendered for many a day unserviceable. And the two tiny craft of Italy both steamed back safe to the harbour whence they had issued; and well might Commander Luigi Rizzo hoist at his prow the joyous signal of victory, — of a victory that, for the way of its winning, may well be termed unique in naval story. (*The Senators rise with shouts of « Hurrah for the Navy! », repeated again and again, and taken up in the Galleries*).

### New and formidable trials await us.

Far from our hearts, Illustrions Senators, is every thought of arrogance. If the very superiority of our civilisation did not spontaneously inspire in us the sentiment of moderation, the historic hour that now is ours to live through, so pregnant with fate, and the consciousness that new and formidable trials await us, would suffice (« *Hear, hear!* ») to impose on us an attitude of calm and reflective austerity.

But, none the less, after seven months of hard discipline and of anxious toil in the rally, after having wrestled with every calamity and mourned under every sorrow and suffering, be it granted to this people, if only for a single moment, to give vent to its sense of legitimate pride, be it granted to express all the emotion of its heart and soul, swollen with gratitude to its soldiers and its sailors and the chiefs who guided them to victory. (*Cheers*). We shall not raise in honour of these heroes of ours grotesque colossi of wood, to hammer nails into the same. (*Loud cheers.*) Rather we may augur that from out the inexhaustible genius of Italy there may yet spring forth to the glory of the sun a new divine artificer, who, like Donatello in his St. George and Michael Angelo in his David, may incarnate in

one eternal image of beauty the symbol of the soldier of Italy, who has faced, he too, a foe no less formidable than the giant and no less maleficent than the dragon. (*Cheers*). These sentiments of admiration and of gratitude we now hold confined within us, pent within our breasts, awaiting when for us and for our allies the hour shall strike, that shall proclaim our just cause victorious: but we shall do no deed of thoughtless and foolish arrogance, if from this spot, at this moment, we say to all those valiant ones who defend this immortal Italy of ours on the mountains and on the river bank and on the sea and in the air: — « Sons, sons ours, for what you have done, for what you yet shall do, your Country thanks you, extols you, blesses you ».

(*The Senators rise and burst into loud applause, repeated again and again, and taken up in the galleries. Cries of « Hurrah for the Army! Hurrah for the Navy! Hurrah for Italy! Hurrah for the King ».*)

## TO THE AFTER-WAR COMMISSION

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*At Palazzo Braschi ; July 12th, 1918*

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The work you are beginning to-day, Gentlemen, is without precedent and without comparison, even if we are to regard it merely from the point of view of the number and distinction of those who have been called to take part in it.

As to the number, criticisms have not been wanting nor indeed witticisms either; but to all such cavillings it is sufficient answer to point to the fact that peoples superior to us in this very respect, the spirit and method of organisation, — the English people for instance —, have, in order to attain the ends we are aiming at, created organisations far more complex and numerous than our own.

As to the distinction of its members, we may justly hold that never, perhaps, as on this occasion has the Country gathered into one all its vital energies, from all parties and from all classes; representatives of Parliament, of the great Departments of State, of the industrial, commercial and agricultural organisations, of the trades-unions and all the various combinations among the working-classes of whatever type or school of thought; and with these, men of science too, and men of action, and a feminine element besides, the representative of the genial and welcome assertion of new social energies. And this great united effort



will probably be gradually brought to full completion by the co-operation of other powerful means of action.

We approach the question entirely without prejudice. England, I may, perhaps, mention, and Germany herself, — past master of the art of systematization, as is proved by the superior manner in which she has succeeded in organizing evil-doing, — have completed their work of investigation and deliberation and have now established veritable Ministries for the carrying out of the measures they have decided on, preparing themselves in this way to grapple with the formidable task implied in the after-war question, the task of reconstruction, following on destruction.

As to the field of action allotted to the Commission, we must admit that it is boundless. This war is in itself a great revolution, such as humanity has never before experienced, and its reactions will be incalculable, whether in the juridical sphere, or in the political, or in the economic, social and moral. Look at them from whatever point of view you please, you cannot escape from them; whether you proceed from the general to the special, or from the special ascend to the generating idea, whether you work by synthesis or by analysis, you will always have equally to admit that every problem submitted to the consideration of the Commission is connected with all the rest; so that all the questions which the Commissioners will have to examine and strive to solve, form together a whole of such vastness as to justify in itself the grand scale of our scheme for its consideration. Take for instance the demobilization of the troops. Here we have a technical military problem of the utmost gravity: but, considered from the demographic, economic and social point of view, it is a problem that is necessarily linked with those that will have to be considered in other Sections.

### The demobilization.

The formidable ebb-tide of four millions of men to the fields and to the workshops, does it not, in fact, bring before us at once for solution all the problems set before agriculture and industry if they are to be so organized that workshops and fields welcome back those whom the highest of duties towards their Country has detained far away from them for long years, while at the same time those great labour-energies are not suffered to be dispersed and dried up, which the war itself has created, improvising technical capacities, creating and refining special aptitudes in this or that craft? And the problem of demobilization is linked too with that of the emigration we are to further or to check, or at all events to regulate and discipline: — and with emigration present themselves all the problems, no less essential and absolutely, instantly urgent, of the new spirit that should inform our State organisations abroad, so that to the old and now inadequate tasks of political information and the rigid protection of national interests, may be added the duty these latest days have laid upon them, to be ever present, as the organs of the far-off Fatherland, in aid of the life and the needs of those little Italys, which our incomparable workers have created for us over all the world, — and to make these the means of an economic and political expansion of our Country. of no less value than her territorial.

This one example may suffice to show how impossible it is here to form a general idea without considering it in its particular manifestations; while it is equally impossible to isolate the examination of this or that particular question and not to find oneself necessarily once more on the higher plane of conceptions more or less mediate, whose range seems every moment to grow wider. Hence the necessary condition for the utility of your work, — a condition that is

at the same time the measure of its difficulty; — for it is no other than this, that, while that work must necessarily be fragmentary and divided in its making, it must yet be always co-ordinated with one sole central idea, and must have a conception of this unity, clear, constant and abiding. The need to make division to secure special competence separates your work into parts: but these parts must have ever present the consciousness of the whole.

### Method and time of work.

Let each of the Sections, then, study and act according to the system and method it judges best suited to the special matter it has in hand: but let them all see that there be a continual interchange of ideas, aye, even, when necessary, of commissioners, for, if I may be allowed to borrow a metaphor from physical science, these may be considered true ducts or channels of communication.

As for the time chosen for the beginning and carrying-out of your labours, it is to be observed that the after-war problem comes into being and demands its solution automatically in the very act of entering into war. But, on the other hand, all the elements for investigation and the necessary arrangements in consequence are in a perpetual flux, so that it may be said that a scheme of reconstruction conceived three or four months after the declaration of war would now be altogether valueless. It was indispensable, then, to choose the most favourable moment for commencing the study of these questions. Well, we have chosen a moment which certainly cannot be said to have been prearranged or preordained. Still, we hope that it will prove to be really the most opportune, so that it will enable us to carry out our programme when the time for it has arrived. At all events, if, as we all so desire, a victorious peace is not far away, then, most assuredly, the near approach of the so-

longed-for event will quicken a hundredfold our energies and activities.

Critics and sceptics tell us that the after-war we are really to have, will be determined by the issue of the war. This is one of those many affirmations which, in their over-simplicity, savour of the maxims of M. de La Palisse. Our faith is sure and unshakable that the end of the war will be that which is the wish and the will of the whole civilized world. If it were not so, we should be driven to believe that the whole world was doomed to fall and be destroyed: and in that case, it would matter little if our own efforts too were made in vain. But the truth is far otherwise: the people of Italy has already won its great victory, by the vindication of its claim to be a great people, great not in diplomatic documents but in the faith with which it has faced and faces now this supreme test and peril. And therefore it is that the welcome your President extends to this Commission is no mere expression of full confidence in its fertile labours, but a glad presage too of the grand destinies of the Fatherland. (*The speech, much applauded throughout, was greeted at its close with loud and prolonged cheers.*)

## ENGLAND AND ITALY

### THE WELCOME TO THE LORD MAYOR

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*On the Capitol, Rome: Aug. 24th, 1918*

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In the name of the Italian Government, I welcome the representative of London, the centre of a mighty Empire, — welcome him here in Rome, in Rome whence arose the very conception of empire.

If Rome made this conception a reality by force of arms, — (and no other means was known, no other was possible at that stage of civilisation), — still it was her will and her wisdom to uphold her Empire once won, by force of law. And now, after nearly twenty centuries have passed away, if the story of Rome's great deeds in war awakens the admiration of the little world of scholars only, the creation and the preservation of law remains her eternal title to the devoted gratitude Rome has paid her by all the peoples, who pardon her the blood shed in such torrents, since from it sprang forth the brightest flower of the collective spirit of Humanity, to irradiate the whole world with its light, — law just and equitable, — *bonum et æquum*.

Rising at a period far more advanced in civilisation, the British Empire has succeeded in creating for the peoples composing it a form of public law which, it too, is just and equitable, — an Empire that presents itself to our view not as a forced union created by the will of a despot, but rather as a great league of

peoples, free within the limits their very civilisation imposes on them, And it is from its very nature that this Empire's formidable power is exercised negatively rather than positively, for defence rather than for offence, — to prevent any hegemony founded on force from stifling the conditions necessary for the civil liberty of the peoples, the liberty indispensable to the existence of the British Empire, as of all the other independent nations great or small. Terrible have been the wars England has had to endure in the course of her history to prevent the rise of hegemonies based on force: but this one that now she wages is of all of them the most terrible; for never before has risen up against her an adversary so panoplied in gigantic resources, in aggressive spirit and in diabolic pride.

But if the trial has been harder, the spirit has risen higher to face it. It has long since been remarked, with a truth that time is ever proving more certain, that it is in the spirit of the English people we find that most intimately akin to the spirit of ancient Rome, — above all, the same tenacity in its undertakings, the same calm in the hour of danger, the same constancy in the hour of adversity. Never, in all her thousand years of story, did Rome appear so great in courage and in faith as when, after the battle of Cannæ, lowered over her, insuperable as it seemed, the menace of Hannibal. And even so the example and the soul of Rome brooded over the peoples of the *Entente*, in the darkest and most dread hour of this war, when the collapse and the prostration of Russia gave the enemy a superiority, temporary it is true, but none the less for that formidable and most menacing.

Neither Italy after Caporetto, nor England after St. Quentin, nor France when danger impended over Paris, has felt its faith shaken, or despaired of the final issue of the Titanic strife. They have, one and all, but multiplied tenfold for this their will and their energy and their ardour and their self-sacrifice,

spurred their whole soul to one supreme life-and-death effort, and, strengthened by the fraternal and potent fellowship of the great American people, turned proudly on the foe and smote him back by the magnificent victories on the Piave, on the Marne, on the Somme and on the Aisne, and now face the future with intrepid heart and with firm gaze fixed upon the goal, — upon the victory.

We are, at this hour, as one who striving painfully up to the summit of a lofty mountain, long time has suffered hardest toil and direst peril, nor ever might have the solace to see afar the mountain top, hidden from his gaze by the windings of the tortuous paths: — but lo! the peak now bursts upon his view, towering on high in the clear blue heaven, and clothed with the rays of the sun of victory. What recks he if to attain to it the way be still long, aye still so sore? The wondrous vision upbears our souls in the last hour of trial, perchance the hardest.

Such vision should redouble our efforts, not slacken them. I have always thought, — and I say it frankly out, — that the most fertile cause of all the mistakes — (and they have been neither few nor slight) — made by the Powers of the *Entente*, is to be found in their very consciousness of their own strength. This strength, undoubtedly, was such as to allow of some waste, some carelessness, in seeking out and securing all the means that should aid in the winning of the victory. But we must not now fall into the same mistakes over again. Granting that never as at this hour the certainty of victory has taken firmer or more fixed root in our hearts, still it is at this hour above all that we must maintain the same spirit, the same stern energy, the same passionate ardour, that were ours in the days when the enemy's menace lowered darkest over our heads. Do not let us permit ourselves the least waste of force, the least carelessness, even in the very smallest particular which in the military sphere, or in the diplomatic, or in the economic or

the industrial, may help to render our victory, if not more secure, at least more speedy. Let us temper the souls of all for the crowning trial of our endurance, let us ever more staunchly close our ranks, let us fire for the supreme effort the will and the energy of all.

Meanwhile, I welcome the opportunity to say that nothing could give me more pleasure or more pride than to offer my greeting to the mighty British Nation in the presence of the first citizen of the English metropolis, on this Hill that once was the centre of the world's story and still remains the symbol of all that can be great and august in the world.

A sympathy mysterious but no less profound has always linked together by a bond that may not be broken the spirits, the sentiments, the hearts of our two peoples. The people of Italy are firm in their affections; and they love England sincerely, intensely. The idea of discord with her has always seemed to them and seems now something inconceivable to their intellect and monstrous to their sentiments.

The friendship of Italy for England rises to the height of that which is beyond discussion: ere even reason prove it opportune, useful, just, mere instinct proclaims that it is, that it must be, cannot but be.

And as it is truth our Poet's saying, « *Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona* » (\*), I know well that this affection of ours is fervently returned by the English People. I will not dwell now on the immortal songs of the poets of England, which revealed them lovers of Italy as though they had been her sons. I will not pass in review what England's statesmen did with loftiness of intellect and flame of affection to the end that Italy might rise up a Nation free and independent. I will merely repeat word for word, just as it was told to me, a simple anecdote of

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(\*) « Love that denial takes from none beloved ».

(DANTE, *Inferno*, v: — Cary's tr.).



a common soldier. He was just entering Italy, with his division; and when alighting at one of the first of our stations, he exclaimed: « Beautiful Italy, I am glad to give my life for this fair Land ! » Few though touching words by a simple « Tommy » : but they are the precious and luminous revelation of the soul of a whole people, and in their very ingenuousness and spontaneity they are to us sublimer than any poem.

And what I say of the People I intend should be taken to refer too to all the organs of its Government. In all circumstances, in good and ill, that Government has lent us the most cordial aid and the most friendly care. This is no mere debt of honour I am paying: my soul imperatively constrains me to recognize it, to proclaim it, addressing my sincere and heartfelt thanks to the English Government, in words that are something more and something better than official thanks, that are the manifestation of the friendship, the solidarity and the affection of the whole people of Italy for the whole people of the British Empire.

Gentlemen, we shall go down to-day from this august and auspicious Hill with faith renewed and reinvigorated. Before our eyes gleams the fortunate, the happy day, when the light of victory shall spread over land and sea and proclaim that our good cause has vanquished,

And meanwhile, let the thought of one and all of us be to all the Peoples, small and great, who suffer and combat for Justice and for Liberty, and let it bear them our fraternal greeting of fairest augury. (*Loud applause, in which the Lord Mayor joins.*)

## THE WELCOME TO THE MISSION OF THE JAPANESE RED CROSS

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*At the Grand Hotel. Rome; Sept. 9th, 1918*

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Your Excellency and Gentlemen: —

I welcome with heartfelt cordiality the Mission of the Japanese Red Cross, whose presence here is a new and most gratifying proof of the sympathy of the Japanese people and a fresh confirmation, in itself and in the thought that prompted it, of the intimate friendship and union of the two allied nations. And when I speak these words of welcome, I am but the echo of all the admiration Italy feels for that great people of the Far East, that has awakened for itself the wonder of the world. Prodigious, wellnigh incredible was the swiftness with which, when brought in contact with the conquests of modern Western civilisation, Japan made them her own and mastered them. But more extraordinary still it must seem to us, that while accomplishing such a transformation as this, her people should have been able to accomplish the feat of preserving intact their national character in all its independence; so that an austere conception of life is found in it linked with a profound heroic sentiment in an environment of exquisite art and poesy of loftiest humanity.

Turning to the records of history, we find there the fairest of omens in the presence amongst us of the head of the Mission, Prince Tokugawa, a scion of

a stock that has given its country eminent statesmen and splendid soldiers. It was to that stock that belonged the Shogun Jorasu Tokugawa, who in 1613 permitted ships from the West to cast anchor in Japan, and granted leave to the first Japanese embassy to come to Rome. And now after three centuries, another ideal more resplendent still in present effect and future influence fires the soul of his descendant. He bears to us here in Rome Eternal the assurance of the whole-hearted support of his powerful Nation in this gigantic conflict, which we are waging side by side for the supreme cause of Justice and of Liberty.

Your Excellency and Gentlemen: —

There is a remarkable tendency common to the genius of great peoples, leading them all alike to clothe in poetic form the legends and the myths of their own origin. The first mortal emperor in the theogonic legend of the Japanese dynasty, Gimmu Tenno, the Son of Heaven, was checked, we are told, in his first conquests by a chain of mountains, which he would never have succeeded in passing, had not a falcon appeared to him to point him out the way: — and this falcon was to him a guide and an omen of victory. And precisely in the same way Romulus saw in the vultures the fortunate and happy omen for the creation of the city, that was to extend its empire over all the world and its glory over all the ages.

And to-day when already in the radiant heaven hover the fair signs we know to be the precursors and the presages of victory, it is a lofty satisfaction and a flattering honour to me, to call on you to drink to the ancient and the present glories of Japan and of Italy, to the dazzling hopes of the future of the two Allied Nations, to the prosperity of His Majesty the Emperor and of the valorous and noble People over whom so happily he reigns. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

## FOR PEACE WITH VICTORY

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies: Oct. 3rd. 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council  
— The last days of our preceding Session closed with a glorious assertion of our hope and faith: the whole House seemed inspired by one sole profound sentiment, a presage of and a faith in the victory of our army, engaged in a duel to the death. How splendidly our ardent vows have been accomplished, shall not be told by us: we will leave it to be told by the voices of bitterest anguish and desolate lament that ring through the halls of the Parliaments of Vienna and of Buda-Pest. (*Hear, hear!*)

The Italian Parliament with Italian sobriety, but with the most heartfelt emotion will confine itself to-day to expressing yet once more its gratitude to the soldiers of Italy, who have saved the Fatherland, and to their Commander-in-Chief and their other captains, who have led them on to victory, (*General, prolonged and enthusiastic applause. Members rise to their feet with cries of «Hurrah for the Army!»*)

### The victory on the Piave.

Still, we can and we ought, if only with a few brief words, to point out all the effective worth of the battle fought on the Tablelands and on the Piave.

which from the historic point of view seems without compare. For it was then that for the first time Italy with all her forces faced all the forces, so vastly superior, of her secular enemy. In the earlier phases of this war, that enemy had had to divide his army into three, engaged as it was on three fronts, our own, the Russian and the Servian, the place of which last was taken later on by the Roumanian. But last June his whole weight had to be supported by us, — all that could be brought to bear in numbers, efficiency, pride swollen by easy victories over Russia and Roumania. Once more valour had to cope with fury: and once more valour triumphed. (*Cheers.*)

But the victory on the Piave meant more than this. It marked a decisive turn in this world-wide war. (*Hear, hear !*) There seemed to flash forth from it a presage of the victories that were to follow. (*Loud cheers.*) A most happy coincidence this, had it been but a presage and nothing more: but after four years of war we are become sufficiently expert in interpreting the working of our enemies' minds in their war-making, to reconstruct, so far as human certainty can go, the plan which must undoubtedly have been theirs.

After defeating by a formidable blow the enemy they considered least efficient from a military point of view, Italy that is to say, — they would have taken advantage of the period of grave difficulty which would have followed on our front, to enable the best troops of the Austro-Hungarian army to pour down upon the soil of France, and having thus largely reinforced the German army, to try to bring the struggle on the Western Front to a decisive close, before the huge force America would bring to bear could make its weight felt. (*Hear, hear !*). The Austrian offensive of the 15th of June was linked, then, intimately with the German offensive of the 15th of July, and the firmness of our brave fellows not only saved the Fatherland, but splendidly aided the common cause.

(*Loud and prolonged cheers. Cries of « Hurrah for the Army! »*).

### Our soldiers in France.

And then began a series of wondrous victories. Whole districts reconquered, hundreds of towns and villages freed, prisoners by the hundred thousand and guns by the thousand, this is already the triumphant outcome of the giant battle, which for two months and a half has been waged by the armies of the allied nations, gloriously vying one with another which of them can show most valour, all under the command of that great leader, Marshal Foch (*Cheers*): — and to the victory in France make answer no less sounding and decisive the victories in Macedonia and in Palestine. Nor are the arms of Italy without share in the cycle of these glorious transformations. While our gallant battalions in great strength have admirably discharged the task assigned them by the sole command on the Balkan Front, the valour of our men first in sustaining the shock of the German attack before Rheims and now of late in sharing with brilliant courage and *élan* in the reconquest of the fiercely contested *Chemin des Dames*, has earned the high praise of their comrades in France, the most competent of judges of valour in war. (*Loud cheers*).

On our own main front, on the other hand, there has been nothing of late in the way of a great battle; but our troops have persistently taken the offensive and never without success, in many fortunate and important actions, though only of local extension.

The right wing of the one sole army, extending from the North Sea to the Adriatic, — the wing, that is, which constitutes the Italian front, — has up to now taken its essential part in the common colossal battle by holding engaged against itself the great bulk of the army of Austria-Hungary, considerably superior in numbers, just as the population of that State is by a third superior to ours. (*Loud cheers*.)

The unity of the front is no rhetorical phrase, but a tangible and effective verity; and if the whole military effort of the *Entente* and of the United States of America has been directed to the French front, concentrating, there, so far, their offensive movement, this is because the central idea of that offensive so demands, the guiding hand of the one sole Command so directs; to whose authority we all willingly bow and to whose merits in the interest of the common cause we offer our most grateful tribute of admiration. (*Loud and general applause.*)

### The wonderful energy of the country.

And honourable members must not forget: the people have not been unworthy of their army. In no other State have the economic difficulties arising from the war reached such an acute stage as in Italy. And indeed if it is the difficulty of transport that above all produces this state of affairs and heightens and aggravates it, then Italy was bound inevitably to suffer more than any other country from the difficulties attending the supplies, owing to the far greater proportion of transports she needed for raw material, which unfortunately she is lacking in, — coal, to begin with. But almost everywhere the pressure of necessity has revealed new energies, developed new activities, utilized new resources; and by constant and energetic effort, even if it has not been possible to free us altogether from these difficulties, still the disadvantages and losses and menaces we had to fear from them have been vigorously combated and held in check.

And no less we may say of the labour crisis, determined by the fact that we have upwards of five millions of men under arms, And yet, spite of this, the life of the nation, though no doubt it has suffered, has still been enabled to bear up against the strain put upon it; — and for this in great measure we

have to thank our women, who have courageously taken the place of the men. (*Cheers.*)

When the hour of victory shall sound, our gratitude will, need I say, be great to our sons, who with intrepid soul have endured the sacrifice of the trench and of the battle; but let it not be less for the women of Italy, to whom, in the country districts especially, by toil which I proclaim heroic in its very humility, we are indebted if the life of the Nation has been able to go on running its ordinary course. (*Loud cheers.*)

But the question of supply and food-consumption is still exceedingly grave, owing chiefly to prices being so very high; for this has, on the one hand, nullified the benefit accruing from the high salaries in consequence of the war, and, on the other hand, rendered extremely hard the existence of those humble households where the income has remained absolutely fixed.

This is not the place to enter into a detailed analysis of the causes of the phenomenon I have just referred to. I will merely say the Government is firmly convinced that the most difficult days now lie behind us, and that the curve of price will henceforth be on the downward incline (*Hear hear !*): but on this condition, that the regulations be strictly observed for the articles of food subject to regulation by ticket and State-control. (*Hear, hear!*) Obviously, vast organisations, of this nature cannot be improvised without even numerous inconveniences, especially where the arrangements for their inception must needs be only too imperfect; but meanwhile experience is teaching us every day that where the organisation of the public grain supplies is worked with the most rigid strictness, there it is rarest to find the articles of prime necessity either wanting altogether or sold fraudulently at prices that are exorbitant.

We trust that this experience of ours will convince even the most reluctant of the importance of the strict observance of the necessary regulations: while



the Government, on its part, is firmly resolved continually to increase the severity of its ordinances and organise better the means it has devised to check speculation, as far as that is possible.

As to the finances of the State, they have been most severely tested:—and we are now justified in affirming that the effort made has vindicated once more the solidity of our national organism. The House has already had explained to it the reasons of the enormous rise in the rate of exchange and the humiliating inferiority of our position in consequence, even compared with our enemies', — also the resolute measures taken by Government to remedy this state of things. I am very glad to be able to inform the House of the successful result of our labours. By determined and persistent effort, Government has succeeded in systematizing foreign imports, while reducing consumption to the narrowest possible limits. The agreements, too, made by the Minister of the Treasury with the United States, Great Britain and France respectively, have completely changed the situation. Perhaps financial history does not record an example of a fall in the rate of exchange equal to that which has taken place during the last few months in favour of Italy. (*Hear, hear!*) In the neutral markets, the exchange is now at least fifteen per cent more in our favour than that with Germany and nearly thirty-five per cent more than that with Austria. (*Hear, hear!*)

Owing to the rise of prices, the State has necessarily been compelled to raise the salaries and allowances of all classes of its employees, to the sum total of more than a thousand millions of francs. The allowances to the families of the men called out for military service now exceed fifteen hundred millions *per annum*. If to this we add the charges for the refugees from Venetia, for military pensions, and for the other various forms of State aid, it will easily be seen that the Treasury has a hard task to cope with all the demands civil

and military, now made upon it. Still, the steady increase of the revenue of the State and the inexhaustible energy of our people and its vigorous power of work justify our firm conviction that if union of heart and soul be not lacking, — (and I have faith that it will not) — we shall, even in the difficult period that in all countries will follow on the war, overcome all our difficulties one by one, or even all together, as we have had to overcome them and have still so to do, in these trying days of warfare.

### The recognition of the subject nationalities.

As to our international relations, Gentlemen, certain events that have recently taken place deserve special mention, though they are only the natural consequence of the policy which in its essential lines was laid down in this House in the Government Statement during our sitting of the 12th of February last, — and the natural consequence, too, of the ever-increasing international diffusion which the ideas that policy enunciated have secured.

I refer to the solemn recognition, whereby the struggles for independence, now being made by the nationalities subject to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, are declared by the Powers of the *Entente* to be in harmony with the general principles of liberty and justice, for which these Powers themselves are contending.

State forms are casual and perishable, peoples have an inner spiritual being, wholly independent, it may be, of these forms, and as such to be considered.

And it is very easy to understand why Italy, which is fighting for the independence of all the Italian lands now in subjection to Austria-Hungary, should view not merely with sympathy but with an intimate sense of a common cause the aspirations of other peoples after their independence. So long ago as the 21st of April last, our Government concluded a

convention with the national Czecho-Slovak Government for the formation of a legion to fight on our front: — which meant implicitly the recognition of a Government *de facto*. From that time onward, we have always maintained unbroken, friendly, fraternal relations with that heroic people. (*Loud cheers*). The links that bind us to it have now been strengthened and consecrated by the blood its noble sons have shed while defending on the Alps the land of Italy, as though it were their own. (*Cheers*.) I believe I faithfully interpret the feeling of the whole people of Italy, when I say that the union between the two peoples will endure, loyal and indissoluble, lasting on in the fruitful economic relations and mutual sympathy which will establish themselves between us after the war is over. (*Loud cheers*.)

For the same reasons, animated by the same sentiments, and aiming at the same ends, Italy has adopted the same line of policy in all that concerns the movement which is urging on the Jugo-Slav people to struggle for their independence; and in this policy she is in full accordance with the Governments of our Allies. I am not called upon now to explain the profound reasons, which justify the special interest of Italy in this grave question. Nature herself, by approximating and wellnigh confusing the ethnic and geographical boundaries between the two peoples, has laid down such conditions for their mutual relations, that these must necessarily either base themselves on a cordial and sincere friendship or be the cause of painful and arduous dissensions. Italy has loyally chosen and clearly indicated the road she means to follow, and has full confidence that, finding on the other side similar sentiments, she will encounter no bar to the establishment of not merely concord, but an intimate fellowship between the two peoples, to the inestimable benefit of both. (*Loud cheers*.)

## A just peace and the words of President Wilson.

Even though we shrink, — as is our duty, — from indulging in any over hasty optimism, still, Gentlemen, we are justified in asserting that the great events of the last few days have brought us nearer to that just peace, which is the intense aspiration, the most fervent prayer of all suffering humanity. (*Loud cheers.*) If, as I am about to remind you, this consolation is ours in part owing to the forced change in the state of mind of our enemies, I ought still to add at once, that, on the other hand, no importance whatever is to be attributed to the recent Austro-Hungarian Note, except so far as it may be taken as one of the signs of the change in question. But, in itself, this document is obviously not what it claims to be, namely, the first step in negotiations for peace; for, under this aspect, the important point about the Note is not what it says, but what it does *not* say; and what it does not say touches the very essence of the world-wide strife. For instance, might one not fairly argue that, for anything to be found in that Note, Austria might seem to be absolutely ignorant that there is an Italy at war, that there are on Italy's part certain national claims she holds sacred, which were the most immediate, determining causes, that impelled her to take part in the gigantic conflict?

But indeed, comment is useless, when the text is followed by authentic interpretation, and Count Burian has been good enough himself to explain the essential object of this act of his, stating in an interview very recently that he quite anticipated the failure of this step he was taking, but that this did not matter in the least, as his note was to serve as a «reagent» by way of experiment, and his hopes were based chiefly on the various peace-party groups and on the debates which the Note would produce in the Par-

liaments of the States of the *Entente*. (*Cheers. Animated comments.*)

No, when I state that a decisive step has been made towards peace, I mean to refer specially to the magnificent, memorable victories, won by all the armies of the *Entente* on all the fronts (*Cheers*): which are the plain proof in accomplished fact, what profound truth was conveyed in that seeming paradox: — that the true peace party are those who urge on the war with all their might and with the most untiring energy. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*) And already the military factor has had its first reflex influence in the politico-diplomatic sphere, eliminating from the number of the States opposed to us in arms one of the four allied Powers, Bulgaria. In granting the armistice she has accepted, our object has been (and could not but be) to require and to secure all due guarantees of a military nature, while on the other hand reserving the questions which concern territory to the conclusion of peace.

It would be superfluous to spend many words in explaining the great significance of this event and the incalculable advantages it brings to the general situation of the *Entente*; — the surrender of large territories occupied, above all the restoration of the State of Servia, glorified by the valour and martyrdom of her people (*Loud cheers*); the necessity laid on the Central Empires of providing for the defence of a Southern front (*Hear, hear !*); the grave obstacle placed in the way of military communication between those Empires and Turkey; and other possible consequences to boot. (*Hear, hear ! Animated comments.*)

But considering the question from a point of view still more general, we have certainly been brought nearer to peace by the conviction which, owing to the defeats they have endured, is certainly being forcedly impressed on the Central Empires, — that their dream of world-wide sway, a dream long caressed, fostered by long preparation and formidable force, and favour-

ed for a season by all possible good fortune, that this dream, I say, will never be a reality, — never. (*Cheers.*) And to peace we shall come by a second step, — when, I mean, our enemies have formed this second conviction too, that Humanity has the right and the duty to guarantee itself against the permanence of those causes, which have brought about this horrible butchery, and that the blood of millions of men cries out not indeed for vengeance, but for the satisfaction of those noble ideals, for which it has been so generously shed.

No one intends, even on the ground of legitimate reprisal, to make his own the methods of brutal violence, or the schemes of tyrannical dominion and the blotting out of the liberties of any people whatsoever — (*Cheers and loud cries of «Hear, hear!»*), — those methods and those schemes, which have made the whole world rise up in arms against the Central Empires (*Loud cheers*): — but, equally so, no one can admit that it is enough for him who has struck and struck in vain simply to declare that he renounces his base intention (*Loud cries of «Hear, hear!»*), and then moral order is to be proclaimed restored, and certain questions essential for the very existence in peaceful security of the nations, having once been raised, are not to receive the solution Justice demands. (*Loud cheers.*)

Only he who deliberately closes his eyes because he will not see, can fail to recognize the ideal influences that have come to exercise an ever-increasing weight in this war, fusing all the national aspirations of its outset, natural and legitimate though these indeed are, into one great collective aspiration, whose aim is the formation of the International League of the peoples and the creation of new and powerful guarantees against every form of injustice and arrogant pretension among the nations, as the word of President Wilson has proclaimed, with all the power and faith of a new Evangel. (*Loud cheers.*) To se-

cure the first conversion of our enemies, no long time has been needed, It is not yet three months since the most haughty and arrogant speeches were hurled at us with threats ultra-apocalyptic, Let us calmly wait through the season needed for the second conversion to effect itself. (*Hear, hear!*)

Meanwhile, Gentlemen, let us this day greet with sober joy the dawn of that radiant sun which will shine down resplendent on a just peace. But to hasten on that hour, to secure that it be not unworthy of the enormous sacrifices, of the sorrows, the bereavements tongue cannot name nor number, there is but one sole way: — still to insist, still to persist, indomitably, proudly, to the end. (*Loud, general and oft-renewed applause. The members spring to their feet, with repeated cries of « Hurrah for Italy » !*)

## MESSAGE FOR COLUMBUS DAY

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*Sent to New York for Oct. 12th, 1918*

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What is it that places Christopher Columbus among the loftiest, the most magnanimous spirits that do honour to humanity; so that all the changes and chances of time leave his fame eternal, beneath a halo of mystical glory?

Not the intrinsic importance of his discovery, incomparable though it was; — for that might be set down to the credit of fortune. Nor again the marvellous courage and masterly skill with which he faced and vanquished the unknown perils of the Sea of Mystery: — other discoverers too are glorious for their skill and for their courage. Of Italians alone, we need but mention, before him, Marco Polo, after him, Amerigo Vespucci.

The true greatness of Columbus, that which makes his figure tower above and dominate all the rest, lies in this; — that he held fast ever to an « idea » which had flashed upon his divining soul; and to this idea gave all, sacrificed all, — for it supporting adversity and repulses and humiliations, for it defying the obstacles of nature and those still stronger and more insidious raised by men; firm, unshakable, heroic in his faith. His spirit rose lord of circumstance, mightier even than the boundless Ocean he defied with a few crazy barks, a scanty band of comrades who had not the faith that was his.



There was surely much of omen in the fact that under such auspices as these the event came into being, which was to have such a gigantic influence on the story of humanity; and America surely does well to trace her first and most suggestive beginnings less to a bold and fortunate venture than to the consciousness and the apostolate and the triumph of an « idea ». It is the highest honour to America that she has never lost faith in this title to ideal nobility of her birth: — and of this all her story is the glorious proof. The idea of Liberty and the idea of Justice have found in the American people souls resolute to serve them with the most sincere disinterestedness and the most ardent devotion. And hence it is that, showing the world an example one may surely well say stands alone in story, the United States have intervened in the gigantic struggle; generously, spontaneously, they have sprung up in defence of the idea; and to the idea have assured the victory.

On this day, then, all Italy, projecting herself in spirit beyond the Ocean, which now unites us rather than divides, with the legitimate pride of a mother on the altar of the liberty of the American people exalts her immortal son, the while the brightness of the dawn of a just victory already illumines the destinies of the world and bears solace to the aching hearts of men. There could be no ceremony more solemn than this, more august: — its meaning soars aloft and goes forth to all lands as a message of profoundest import, which all men must needs accept and understand. In the name of Liberty, a sure, an impregnable ordinance of Justice is to be established in the world and there endure. America, Italy, and their Allies, animated all of them by this same faith, sharers in one and the same great work, desire but this, will but this: — Justice for each and for all, now and for ever.

## TRENT AND TRIESTE FREED

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*From the balcony of the Hôtel Ligure, Turin: Nov. 5th, 1918*

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Fellow citizens, — nay, brothers in an Italy now united into one sole family: — we have suffered much, but this hour makes up to us for all our sufferings.

I wish I had been with you, when the wild thrill of victory made every heart in Italy beat so passionately and so proudly. I was far away, doing the high duty laid upon me. But this absence of mine has been more than made up to me, as the first great city of Italy that welcomes me on my return, while our patriotic joy glows still so ardently, is Turin, — that old Turin, always linked in my mind with the tender memory of my father's good grey head; for it was listening to his words that I first learned to love her, the gleaming harbour-light that guided us to independence and to unity.

Yes, it was here that arose in years long past the presage and omen of the events that have now had their consummation, in our entry into Trento and Trieste. Gloriously at this hour around the names of these two cities, so long the glowing aspiration of our hearts, the cycle closes which had its beginning with the martyrs of the Spielberg (\*).

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(\*) The place of detention in Austria of the Italian political prisoners.

I am not going to make a speech to you. I was able to find in the depths of my tortured heart the cry of resistance, when disaster came to our Country. But now, in the hour of joy, I have only the sob that chokes my utterance, the tears that *will* roll down my cheeks. Great sorrows can be borne, crushed down: not so, great joys.

I will say but this. Italy, men of Turin, has won a victory among the greatest history records; not only because that victory marks the definite assertion of the unity of a people into one sole State, but also because it has at the same time hurled down for ever all that survived of that older Europe, feudal, reactionary, the oppressor alike of men and of nations. From this hour, may we not say, a new spirit of liberty hovers over the world and everywhere pervades it.

Most assuredly, it has cost us much, this victory, — the most tremendous sacrifices, the noblest blood, tears, anguish, heart-rending bereavements. But just for this we give it the more loving greeting, are more proudly exalted in our welcome of it.

We have deserved it.

Trent and Trieste, the two cities whose loved names we learnt in our very cradle and bore like two thorns in our bleeding hearts all the long years of silent waiting, — it was not for us to receive them as largesse, be it largesse ever so lavish. They were always dear to us, always sacred: — they are dearer still now, — now that we have won them at the price of sorrow and of blood.

One last trial awaits us: one more duty is ours to do. Of the arrogant coalition that loosed on us the scourge of war, the fourth member, the one of greatest tenacity and pride, has yet to be struck down, and must be. Well this duty too we will do: this trial too we will overpass. But meanwhile I call on you at this hour of indescribable emotion which carries us away and holds us captive, to join with me in concentrating all the feelings, all the throbbings,

all the raptures of our hearts in one loud cheer for Italy and for her King. (*The speech, interrupted almost at every sentence by wild bursts of cheers, was followed at its close by a perfect delirium of enthusiastic applause.*)

TO THE PEOPLE OF ROME  
ACCLAIMING THE TRIUMPH  
OF THE ITALIAN ARMS.

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*Rome, from Palazzo Braschi, Nov. 9th, 1918*

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*(H. E. Signor Orlando, whose return from the Italian front had been anxiously awaited, was receiving in his room at the Home Office the Senators and Deputies who had come to render him in the name of the Nation its devout and grateful homage, when the people, who had thronged en masse to Piazza S. Pantaleo and to the parts near it of Piazza Navona, improvised one of the grandest and most impressive demonstrations conceivable, with loud cheers for « Trent and Trieste! », for « Orlando! », and for « The Minister of Victory! ».*

*The cheers became more enthusiastic still, even deafening, when Signor Orlando appeared on the balcony.)*

People of Rome: —

We had recourse to words of burning eloquence when it was the hour to hurl back into the throat of our enemy his outrage against us and when the whole Nation, with magnanimous firmness, rose up against the adversary and against Fate with one sole will indomitable: — Resist! Resist! Resist!

Now, in the hour of exultation for our well-earned victory, we, unlike our overbearing foe, have no need of words of pride. This, however, we have the fullest right to proclaim without exaggeration and without

vainglory: — to this victory, which is the victory of the rights of Italy and at the same time the victory of the rights of Liberty and of Justice, — to this victory of Italy's, that bears with it such profound consequences throughout the world, history has no parallel save in Rome alone. It is a *Roman* victory.

One in fervid heart and soul, there rises from out our breasts the irrepressible cry of joy and exultation: « Hurrah for Trent! Hurrah for Trieste! » — there rises the glad acclaim to the King, to the Army, to the Navy, to this immortal Italy of ours, and the thrice threefold hurrah to Rome, in whose name Italy has fought and conquered.

*(A ringing, thundering applause burst forth from all the people, and Minister and people took up once more the cry: « Hurrah for Italy! » « Hurrah for the King! » « Hurrah for Rome! »)*

*And amid ever-increasing enthusiasm Signor Orlando concluded as follows: —*

Resist! Resist! was our watchword, our resolve constant, unshakable. And in our heart and in our soul we had ever the vision of our lands profaned and of our lands unredeemed. They were awaiting us, calling on us, our brethren there, — those who for a year had suffered slavery and those who had suffered it for too long lapse of years.

We have found the way, the will, to resist. And following on the resistance, lo! the great, the irresistible, the wondrous victory!

Hurrah for Trent! Hurrah for Trieste! Hurrah for Italy! *(Deafening applause, that seemed as though it would never end.)*

## VICTORY !

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies : Nov. 20th, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council.  
*who, on rising, is received with loud and prolonged cheers. —*

The immensity of the events that have followed one another during the last few weeks transcends equally the power of the intellect to grasp them and the power of speech to express them. The dawn I greeted with sober joy when I spoke in this House on the 3rd of last October, is now radiant, dazzling noon-day. The victory is ours; and if not yet the peace, still of the peace the sure promise; and it is past and gone, the scourge of devastation and of death.

While Man seems to be emerging still incredulous out of the slaughter of which the world has never seen the like to gaze on the vast ruins still smoking all around him, our mind goes back to dwell on the long dread months we have lived through amid every form of anguish. We see once more the whole Earth smitten by the exterminating scourge of war, the millions of young lives mown down in the Titanic strife, the murderous letting loose of Man's worst instincts, rage, cruelty, hate, revenge. But even in the presence of this tragical vision, our conscience knows no trembling, for it has nothing to cast in our teeth. (*Loud cheers.*)

Yes, even if we could still the exultation of victory,

our soul, free from all shadow of self-reproach, nay, from all shadow of hesitation, would yet recognize that all we did we were in duty bound to do (*Cheers*), since just and necessary was our war. We had at one and the same time to fulfil the vow to complete the national unity, the sacred heritage handed down to us by our fathers, by the apostles and by the martyrs of the New Birth of our Nation (*Cheers*), and to secure the prime, essential conditions of our existence as a State independent (*Loud cheers*) and therefore secure within its confines; — we had, side by side with the peoples unjustly attacked, to champion the liberty of them all and justice for them all against the world-grasping violence of one (*Hear, hear!*); — we had, in short, to risk life to save all that makes life worth living (*Loud and general applause*), under pain of a sentence of moral incapacity. And now when the war is so fairly won, the insuperable reasons and ideal motives that urged us into the Titanic strife shine forth before the eyes of the world to bear witness to the nobility and the grandeur of the war waged by Italy. (*Loud cheers.*)

And for the verdict that proclaims this our title of glory, we point to our victory itself, which in its fullness and in its consequences may well be said to cast into the shade every other, even the grandest, recorded in the pages of history.

Not that we would consider the conflict in the light in which the judgment of God of old days was regarded, where simply to come off victor meant to have right on one's side: — we would rather say that the *Entente* would never have succeeded in overcoming the formidable organisation of its enemies, had everything depended on the number of cannon, of machine guns, and of muskets, or on the astute and unprincipled pre-arrangement of traps and snares, from the torpedo to the asphyxiating gas, from the plan of invasion of Belgium to the plan of invasion



by spies all the world over. (*Loud cries of «Hear, hear!»*)

In strife on such battle-ground, it is improbable enough that Italy and her allies would have been the victors, if over and above material force they had not been upheld by a great force that was moral. (*Hear, hear!*)

And indeed the judgment truly solemn here, the verdict verily without appeal, has been pronounced by those very peoples who, constituting so to speak a gigantic machine placed in the heart of Europe, lowered over it as a menace permanent and inexorable. For if, assailed by blows, however formidable, this menace was annihilated and the machine fell shattered into fragments and found in itself no strength to rise again, — does not this prove that it must needs have been a thing unnatural and monstrous? The most perfect mechanism, if a single spring is broken, if a single wheel does not work, is no better than brute and inert matter; while the idea, even if oppressed, even if overwhelmed, finds in its divine essence mysterious energies of victorious reaction. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

And it is in virtue of this that Italy has been able to close with her triumph the duel that has lasted for three quarters of a century through wondrous alternations of disaster and of glory. Striking down now her adversary, she not only finally consecrates her incontestable rights and launches the cry of liberation for all her sons, but with her blood, by her victory, she has lent a decisive aid to the liberation of all the peoples doomed to be subjected to the most intolerable of all dominations, that founded on supremacy of race, and has opened up to these peoples the path to a higher order of civilisation and to more fortunate destinies.

And above all it was the might of an idea that inspired the Italian people with the faith which upheld them throughout forty-one months of war, so that nei-

ther the doubts insinuated by subtle disputants nor the discouragement caused by real reverses ever availed to weaken their energies or to shake their spirit. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

The enthusiasm of the early days of the war was tempered gradually to austere discipline, to tenacious firmness; but the flame that glowed in our hearts, if it blazed less, burned mightier than ever. And when the most terrible adversity smote us all, of a sudden, with a menace the more dreadful, the more it lurked obscure, and the enemy could boast that he had annihilated our army and severed the bond that held us together as a nation, then that flame burst out into a vast conflagration, and a whole people sprang up as one man, proudly resolute to do all, dare all, to combat the enemy and each event, yea, Fate itself. (*Enthusiastic applause.*)

In this faith, which seemed to dominate destiny, was then our salvation. In and through it was at last to be our victory.

From out those sinister days our virtues seemed to shine forth, as of a race truly immortal. Upon the mountains of the Fatherland and along the inviolable river, the army was one bulwark of bronze; and behind it, old men, women, boys stood toiling with redoubled energy at the increased labour imposed on them by the war, calmly supporting weariness and privation, sacrifice and sorrow.

The word of the King had gone forth; and as he bade, there was but one sole army (*Hear, hear!*). Resist: — that was the resolve that was our salvation. And resist one hour longer than our foe: — that was the secret of our victory. (*Hear, hear!*) And that victory is the victory of the army and the victory of the people welded into one in the unity of the national spirit. (*Cheers.*)

We celebrated long since in this House the memorable victory of last June: — but that was only the victory of our defence. Italy was saved; but our

provinces were not reconquered, our brethren who called on us for aid were not redeemed, the enemy was not vanquished. And those very deeds of war of such good omen that victory final and secure seemed henceforth to throne on the glorious banners of our Allies, on us imposed for a while the duty to stand on the defensive.

And we waited, straining at the leash, our hour; and when it came, our army sprang forward with a rush that swept all before it. Nothing could arrest it, — neither the river-stream swift and treacherous, which carried away the bridges and swept them down its current; nor the mountain crags inaccessible no less from the sheerness of their ascent than from the withering fire poured down by the enemy's artillery from his dominating positions on them; nor the enemy's resistance, before which as chivalrous foes it is right for us to bow our heads in admiration of a valour displayed under such conditions that we are justified in terming it extraordinary. And it was so, that valour, if we consider that this army of theirs, behind which their whole State reeled on the brink of utter dissolution, seemed to stiffen itself for a desperate defence, as though it would fain close with a deed of heroism its agelong story, which in very truth could boast of grand military traditions. (*Cheers.*)

But even this resistance had to yield and sink to nothingness. The plan the leaders of our army devised so ably, worked itself out with wondrous efficacy, — (*Loud applause. Ministers and Members spring to their feet with cheers for General Diaz.*) — cutting the Austrian army in two and separating the enemy's forces on the mountains from those in the plain, breaking their line by one of the most brilliant of such manœuvres that military history has in its annals. (*Cheers.*) From the Stelvio Pass to the sea, the fatal crescent which had been the theatre of a hundred battles alternately lost and won, is now all illumined by our victory. Now it is no more a battle won, but

a whole army that disbands, a whole empire that crumbles into ruin.

In a few brief days we win back the cities that for a whole year had proudly borne their martyrdom, — our Udine, our Belluno, — (*Loud cheers:*) — we free our brethren who for tens of years had appealed to us in their anguish: — one and the same day sees the tricolour of Italy re-enter Udine, sees it wave over Rovereto, over Trent and over Trieste. (*Loud and general applause, Cheers for Trent and for Trieste.*)

What is this but a miracle? A miracle that only faith could have wrought (*Loud, general and prolonged cheers.*)

Trent and Trieste and you all, beloved Italian names of Italian towns and cities, — you who were our dream, our love, our devotion, . . . (*The President of the Council speaks these words in a voice broken by profound emotion. Enthusiastic and general applause. Repeated cheers for Trent, Trieste, and « Fiume, city of Italy! »*) — We murmured then those names, crushing down the long-sigh of our hearts, through the long, long years of silence and of waiting. We made of them our war-cry when we girded up our loins for the formidable strife. To them our heroes, on the mountain slopes, and on the thunder-smitten banks of the Isonzo and the Piave, and on the terrible crags of the Carso (*Applause, Cheers for the Duke of Aosta,*) gloriously made a holocaust of their blooming youth, spent in a vision of glory.

But what sacrifice, even the greatest, could seem overmuch in comparison with the worth of those cities, which with pride truly Latin endured every martyrdom to preserve pure and whole their soul Italian? To their tenacious affection anguished for the common Fatherland, Italy owed no less than this: — she owed the offering of her energies to the last ounce, of her blood to the last drop: — she owed this, to die for them, or with them to conquer. (*Loud cheers.*)

Amid the grandeur of our triumph, Gentlemen, in

this House at once thrilled to the very core and gravely conscious of the solemn hour. from out our soul no single word rises to our lips to-day of rancour or of scorn against our enemy, nought but a word of gratitude to the artificers of that we have so greatly taken on us to do.

Gratitude to the Army and to the Navy (*Loud and general applause. Cheers for the Army and the Navy*), — to the King who of his soldiers is verily the first, to the King, who to himself and to all was ever a beacon-light of serenity and a flame of faith, even in the darkest hours (*Loud and prolonged applause. Cheers for the King*), — to the General-in-Chief, to all our other captains, who consecrating the faith of their hearts to the service of their lofty intellect surely guided us to victory (*Cheers*), — to all our soldiers and sailors (*Loud, general and most prolonged applause*), of whom, for what they have done and dared on land, on sea, in air, no word will ever worthily tell the tenacity and the hardihood, the devotion rising to enthusiastic exaltation, the sense of duty sublimed in sacrifice. (*Cheers.*) Blessings, blessings on these our sons, in whom is centred all our hope, all our pride, all our glory! (*General and enthusiastic cheers.*)

And gratitude, too, to our Allies (*Loud, general and prolonged applause, directed towards the Diplomatic Gallery*), who stood by our side, nay, nobly insisted on holding the posts of greatest danger and greatest honour in a fervent brotherhood in arms, fighting for Italy with the same generous devotion as for their own hearths and homes (*Cheers*), while our Italian soldiers on the fields of France and in the Balkan Peninsula with proud valour high upheld the honour of the Fatherland (*Loud cheers*), well earning the glowing praise of all who were the rivals of their valour and the sharers in their glory. And the fervour of this gratitude should be ours not only to the soldiers of our Allies but to their peoples too, — to their peoples, with whom we have linked ourselves in an abiding fellowship of spirit,

will and force; — to heroic France (*Loud, general and most prolonged applause*), to whom we are linked at this hour by the bond of a common joy that thrills our inmost hearts, while to the brotherly cry of exaltation, « Trent and Trieste! » re-echoes trumpet-shrill the answering cry of « Strasburg! » and of « Metz! » (*Loud applause. Cheers for France*), — to England (*Loud, general and most prolonged applause. Cheers for England*), who, while she sustained on sea a gigantic struggle against an ever-increasing multiplicity of the deadliest snares, has revealed once more all the force of her marvellous will in the creation of a mighty army, which has shown itself worthy of its loftiest traditions (*Loud cheers*), — to the United States of America (*Loud, general and prolonged applause. Ministers and Members spring to their feet with repeated cheers for President Wilson*), who, by an act of moral grandeur, unparalleled in history, have shown by their magnanimous disinterestedness how a people may be given to consecrate the purity of its ideals of justice by the noblest blood of its sons. (*Cheers.*)

And gratitude, lastly, to all our own people (*Cheers*), who knew no despair in the days of disaster, no arrogance in the hours of triumph (*Cheers*), but tempered to suffering and animated by their faith, with sleepless and febrile labour toiled on at the huge task that was to be the foundation of the wondrous victory. (*Loud cheers.*) Every one who bore his pain in silence, every one who did conscientiously his duty, even the humblest, has been a fellow-worker in this victory, is a sharer in this glory. (*Loud, general and prolonged cheers.*)

I cannot, save with these words of gratitude my heart's emotion prompts me with, glorify as it deserves the victory of Italy in the Parliament of Italy. Nor can I set about seeking for parallels to this our victory throughout the ages, calling to my mind in all the centuries of story the triumphs most memorable. This only I will say, that a soul of greatness that is all

Roman pervades this latest of epopees; and in sober truth, never, as in this hour, has Italy stood forth the worthy heir of Rome. (*Loud cheers.*)

### The triumph of the principle of nationality.

This war without precedent, Gentlemen, has brought with it corresponding changes of incalculable importance, both international and political. A State disappears, Austria-Hungary, which was an anachronism, a medley, I mean, of peoples differing in language, differing in race, differing in story, held together merely by force. And disappears too, or at the least is reduced to more endurable possibilities of misgovernment, the phantasm, dripping, shadow though it was, with blood newly shed, of the Ottoman Empire. A recomposition, though after what manner we have yet to discover, awaits the nationalities till lately held together within the Russian Empire. And while that is still in the making, atonement has come for one of the most shameful pages of history, the dismemberment of Poland. (*Loud applause. Cheers for Poland.*) Everywhere triumphs the principle of nationality, the purest assertion of the democratic spirit, which found an apostle in that glory of democratic Italy, Giuseppe Mazzini. (*Loud applause. Cheers for Mazzini.*)

And with the transformation of the States there is a corresponding transformation of the Governments. The close of the war finds still in existence no single one of those military autocracies which appeared so firmly rooted, but on the contrary have collapsed without dignity and without inspiring a single sigh of regret. (*Hear, hear!*)

The immensity of these events! Was I wrong when I said that the very power to grasp them and to put them into words is lacking to us?

And all this is happening not merely after the war, but because of the war. (*Hear, hear!*)

It is not for the first time that I say in this House

that this war is also the greatest revolution both political and social (*Loud cheers*) which history records, greater even than the French Revolution.

### The duties the new age brings with it.

Well, Gentlemen, no one can be more profoundly convinced than I am, that the new age now beginning assigns to Italy new and weighty duties, especially in the social field: but it is not my intention to-day to trace out a regular programme of reform. I hope you will all understand the reason of my reserve, — my very consciousness of the gravity and importance of the question. (*Hear, hear !*) A season such as this, when the Government is giving an account of its stewardship, discharged amid the passing of those great events which ushered in this period of its Ministerial existence. and now are closing it, — such a season, I say, is not the most favourable to lay before you the ordered programme of a course of action, which demands for its development all the energies of a regenerated people. And still less is this possible now for this further reason, that the problems of the passage from a state of war to a state of peace are no less formidable and far more urgent. (*Cries of « Hear, hear ! » Interruptions from the Extreme Left.*)

As to these last, at a moment like this, I must content myself with a bare enumeration of them. For to discuss them all even in the most cursory way, would be impossible.

We have, first of all, then, to face the manifold difficulties of an international order in the definitive establishment of peace.

We have, further, to take measures for the restoration of the provinces lately invaded and for their just compensation for the losses incurred owing to the war, arrangements with regard to which have now been definitely made and are about to be rendered public. Then again, we have to solve all those most delicate



problems, both technical and social, which are involved in the demobilisation of the army and of the war-industries.

And we have besides to face the difficulties attending the question of supplies; and here the cessation of hostilities which has just taken place does not lighten our task, but aggravates it. This will be obvious if you reflect that, if we include in our reckoning our reconquered provinces, the new lands occupied, our own returning prisoners, and the prisoners taken from the enemy, the increase of population which we have to provide for, is more than five millions. (*Comments.*)

And Parliament and Government must decide without delay as to the arrangements already prepared for their approval on behalf of our heroic combatants, in order that our inestimable debt of gratitude to them may find its equivalent, so far as that is possible, in corresponding action on our part. (*Cheers.*)

I should not be dealing openly with you, if I did not state clearly and at once, that the Government is fully sensible of all the difficulties inherent in the necessary cessation of the exceptional legislation the war has brought into being, while we are still traversing an exceptional period of transition, which is not yet peace, though hostilities have ceased.

The Government has already taken this question in hand, which I may term political demobilisation, and will persist in such action, in order that, with the peace, public and private law may resume their normal working: — but still I must warn you that never, perhaps, so much as now is it imperative that social order be maintained. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*)

The present moment demands of us a discipline certainly not inferior to the discipline demanded by the war we have just been waging (*Loud cheers*): since all the energies of the Country must be directed immediately and urgently to the restoration of all the war has destroyed, to the speediest possible transfor-

mation of industry, to the most methodically organized transference of millions of men from the tasks of war to the labours of peace.

If then, Gentlemen, our very reverence for the solemnity of the hour and the gravity of the question causes us to refrain from a detailed exposition of a vast plan of reform, it is none the less our wish and our duty solemnly to reaffirm our irrevocable pledge to strive from this day forth to raise our efforts and our energies to the level of the austere duties imposed upon us by this war. The very horrors we have witnessed and suffered from, should have this virtue, to free us from the menace of their repetition: so that war shall appear to future generations as remote from possibility as are to us the manners and customs of the prehistoric age. (*Cheers.*)

The question is not so much to discover the new form of social relations, which will ensure the peaceful solution of every dispute the future may bring with it, as to realise and profess this positive verity, — that in the moral world, it is not the force of higher rights that is now coming into being, but the force of higher responsibilities and therefore higher duties. (*Hear, hear!*) And hence it was that to the theory of Germanic imperialism, *the right of the stronger*, President Wilson opposed that of *the duty of the stronger*, and gave the noblest practical illustration of it, when he deliberately subjected the force of the United States to the superior authority of the moral law. (*Loud applause. Cheers for President Wilson.*)

After this manner then, just as the national law and right of free States rests less on coercion than on the general sense of obligation and duty among its citizens, so shall the international law and right of the new epoch come to rest on a like moral sense, all the world over. (*Hear, hear!*) And if any hold that such ideas as these are mere utopias, it is enough to remind him, that this world-wide moral sense we felt growing within us both as neutrals first and then as

belligerents in this tremendous war, that we watched it ripening amid our perils and pains and sacrifices, and that we have finally seen it work the miracles of the ever larger intervention of new forces, attracted towards us by a moral force, and of the ever closer co-operation of the allies, insomuch that our financial resources, our ships, our grain, our coal, our raw material, our economic resources, and even our very armies, were thrown into one common stock and dealt with as though we were but the individual States in a great federal Commonwealth.

This moral force, common to a group of States comprising hundreds of millions of men, revealing itself first as but a spontaneous, trembling aspiration, gathered strength every day, till it has developed into a law ever more imperious, before which all particularistic action and sentiments have had to bow, and which has conducted us to our victory of to-day. And it bears within it such a potent force of irradiation that the whole world must needs one day own its sway.

But this removal of the causes of sanguinary conflicts in the future, mighty as such a change is, does not exhaust the list of the transformations wrought by the war for the benefit of the days to be. The predominating characteristic of the present war, as I have already pointed out, is this ; — that it has been comprehensive and universal as never war was before, not only because, virtually if not literally, it has involved all mankind, but also because it has attacked and overthrown systems, faiths, institutions, principles, every aspect of life in short, moral, political and social.

Once founded, then, the new international law, — nay, shall we not rather say, a *true* international law, — it cannot but react most forcibly on the public law of each individual State, and extend its influence even to private law too, which up to now has been, so to speak, reduced to stable equilibrium, condemned to

immobility in certain of its branches, ever since the days of Roman law.

Now, then, we see clearly the intimate connection between the international question and the social, as we view their working in the military question, the financial, and all the other possible modes of their presentation, which have been as it were the links in the chain that has secretly but necessarily subjected the most essential problems of the economic, moral, and spiritual life of the peoples to this possibility, which to our misfortune has been realised, namely that the criminal folly of one man or of some few men might bring on mankind so awful a catastrophe, (*Loud cheers.*) The enormous production of wealth, which will take place first of all to repair the vast ruin wrought by the war, and further, owing to the very fact of the setting free of the enormous energies dissipated in the prosecution of it, — this gigantic production, I repeat, will not be possible, if it is not dominated by the advent of true justice for all classes, if it cannot rise above forms now antiquated and inadequate. And for this there will be no need of violence from any quarter whatsoever: *quærite justitiam et omnia vobis data erunt.* (*Cheers.*)

The people of Italy, who, — their legitimate national aspirations once satisfied, — have no imperialistic aims whatsoever, for through the fruitful and diligent toil of their sons they have been able in the past, and will be still better able in the future, to win by peaceful means their remunerative and honoured place in every part of the globe, — the people of Italy have for these new duties of the new era a natural vocation, clearly determined. Our institutions, essentially democratic, allow of every imaginable development, every imaginable transformation. (*Loud and prolonged cheers.*) Italy that rose equal to herself in the war, will know how to surpass herself in the peace. And the generous blood, the precious blood, that has so copiously watered the earth, will not have been shed in vain, if

by reason of its shedding shall be renewed the mystery of redemption through sacrifice, and if through it shall be made true the prophecy of our Sacred Bard: —

« . . . Secol si rinnova,  
« Torna giustizia . . .  
« E progenie discende dal ciel nuova ». (1)

(*Loud general, prolonged and repeated applause. The Ministers and a crowd of Members hurry to congratulate the President of the Council.*)

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(1)

« Lo !

« A renovated world, Justice returned,

« . . . . .

« And a new race descended from above.

(DANTE, *Purgatorio*, c. 22, 70-72. *Cary's Trans.*; cf. VIRGIL, *Ecl.* IV. 5).

## AFTER THE VICTORY

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*Before the Chamber of Deputies, Nov. 27th, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council:  
— Honourable members will understand without any words of mine the manifold reasons why in the communications I can and ought to make at this stage of the debate I do not refer to a number of special questions, however important they may be, which have been raised during its course. Answers in reference to these questions have, besides, already been given by other members of the Government, and opportunities will be given later on for further communications respecting them in the coming debate on the estimates. And in any case, honourable members may feel perfectly assured that their wishes and suggestions will be given the most careful consideration by the Government.

A debate on a Government statement naturally leads to discussion of the main lines of its policy, especially at a time like the present. Still the House will, I feel sure, allow me to begin by referring briefly to certain special matters, which claim attention because the interest is so great which they excite in the mind of Members. And here I refer above all to the sorrows and trials and sufferings so heroically borne, of our brethren of the Provinces invaded. Well, the questions respecting them present themselves under two aspects,

There are, first of all, the measures urgent in such a case, and secondly, the systematic, permanent measures incumbent on us to meet the claims for compensation for losses incurred. Now, as to the first, I feel bound to make a distinction which is really forced on me by the nature of the case. We must distinguish here between what the heart prompts and what the intellect approves.

### Aid to the provinces liberated.

Sentiment necessarily makes all our efforts seem inadequate before the gravity of the sufferings. And I quite understand the protests this excites, nay, fully justify them; for, no matter how much we may do, there still remain, unfortunately, urgent need and grave suffering. But consider the question from the point of view of the practicable, and the more you do so, the more you will realize why I ask you to reflect that, just as once in the guise of disaster, so now in the guise of good fortune, we have a problem set before us under conditions such as to render simply appalling the question of adequately grappling with it. They were nearly five hundred thousand in number, those refugees who poured into the Country during those tragic weeks of the November of 1917; and now in a few glorious days the irresistible advance of our troops has won back all their homesteads for the Fatherland.

When my honourable friend the member for Udine (Sig. Girardini) in his noble and impassioned speech told us of those Italian soldiers, who reached Udine in such plight that Udine's poor, her poorest, had to give them sustenance, his words awoke in my heart no less admiration than emotion. Yes, Udine, our Udine, it was meet that she should be won back to us by war and by right of war, not by the mere granting of an armistice.

Now, in such a state of things, whatever *could* be

done *has* been. Escorts are not to be found: everything has been carried off: means of communication there are none; the railway-lines are blocked or cut; even the ordinary roads are in such a state that transit over them is extremely difficult.

If I remind you of all this, it is because I would ask you not to judge the Government too hardly, but to take into consideration the really formidable difficulties it has had to encounter. Still so much as this I can affirm with a good conscience, that owing to the efforts made of late, the situation has rapidly improved. Unfortunately it was such that, spite of this improvement, rapid though that has been, we cannot but admit that it is still worse than the people of those provinces have the right to expect and we the duty to establish. Still, I repeat, there has undoubtedly been an improvement.

And as to the law respecting compensation for losses incurred, it is a great satisfaction to me to be able to tell the House that it is now before Parliament. Indeed, pending its passing there, it is already in operation, in order that its beneficial effects may be at once experienced. I ask the honourable member for Udine to note that we have the right to arrogate to ourselves this honour, — that first among the Nations Italy recognizes this national duty (*Hear, hear!*) to the provinces invaded. The other States are still at the stage of discussion. The Austrian, I might almost say, had not abandoned our provinces, and already this law was made; — and made with every sentiment of love and devotion to those provinces' brave and noble inhabitants. (*Loud cheers.*)

That law, Gentlemen, may acquit us, — (inadequately, perhaps, owing to the formidable juridical difficulties of a technical nature which it brings with it), — of our debt to them so far as this is of nature economic and domanial; but still remains and never can in any way be paid the debt of gratitude of Italy to the noble Province of Venetia. (*Loud cheers.*) Gra-



titude, not only for all she suffered, not only for the ceaseless anxiety she endured while battles were being fought so hard by the fields her peasants still went on to cultivate, — but gratitude above all for the maternal bounty with which the Province of Venetia seemed, as it were, with splendid hospitality to make hers by adoption all the sons of Italy, who found in her the solace as of their own lost hearths and homes. (*Loud cheers.*)

A word is due from me now to the illustrious orator (Sig. Luzzatti), who so moved the House yesterday by his description of the martyrdom endured by the Armenians.

He is not merely a great soul but a great diplomatist too; and so, when the House applauded those words of mine which he repeated here, he was fain to translate this personal pledge of mine into a pledge before Parliament. For this I thank him, and that pledge I will maintain. (*Loud cheers.*)

And a word is due from me too, — (I regard this as a «special matter», as the subject finds no place as part of the general plan of a set speech: — I am speaking, as you see, *à batons rompus*, and this, I hope will serve to acquit me of the charge which some amongst us have, with a courtesy, I admit, beyond all praise, made against me, that in my other speeches I have given overmuch attention to literary finish: it was for this that Prince Bismarck expelled one of our friends from Germany: and I will do my best to profit by the stylistic suggestions honourable members have been good enough to tender me) (*Laughter*): — a word or two, I repeat, is due from me in answer to the impassioned appeal which the honourable member (Sig. Treves) made to me just now, as to the action the Powers of the Entente intend to take with regard to Russia.

## The Entente and Russia.

Well, I will first of all preface what I have to say by one general remark, and it is this: — all the steps decided on in this question have been, are, and will be taken in full accord with President Wilson.

This ought to be a guarantee to honourable members; — unless the admiration for that truly great man is to go on oscillating in the future as it has hitherto. (*Hear, hear!*)

The question, in my opinion, may be stated as follows: —

As to a military occupation of Russia by the *Entente* I know of none, except in the case of the troops landed at Archangel and at Murman, who, perhaps as a « *ruse de guerre* », which, I may add, I have never been able to see the reason of, as such facts are so easy to verify, were announced as being very considerable in number. But the real truth is, that at Archangel and Murman only four battalions were landed, one Italian, one French, one American, and one English. Little more than four thousand men in all, then: and their mission was above all to protect the retirement of their and our fellow-countrymen, whose lives were in peril, even when they bore that name which should have rendered them sacred, the name of ambassador.

Then there were certainly, too, those other troops in the Extreme East, — Japanese and inter-allied, — sent to co-operate with the heroic Czechs, whose march through those remote and difficult regions far surpasses the *Anabasis* celebrated by Xenophon. (*Hear, hear!*)

Well, this was the extent of the occupation. So far as I am aware, there has been no military occupation whatever of Russia by the *Entente*, except in the two above cases.

But there was a military occupation by the Germans, and it was twofold. There were, first of all, the regular

troops, — in what numbers I cannot give the honourable member any reliable information; for in these matters I am always anxious to be exact in any statement I may make. But besides the regular troops, there is no doubt whatever that among the Red Guards there was a very large number indeed, both of officers and soldiers, from among the Germans and Austrians who had been prisoners in Russia. (*Comments in the Chamber.*)

Now according to the terms of the armistice, Germany was to evacuate Russian territory: and this certainly the honourable member ought to set down to the credit of the *Entente*. But Germany informed the *Entente* that the withdrawal of her forces from Russia would be the signal for the most horrible massacres there. Whereupon, in one of the meetings at Versailles, the representatives of the *Entente* found themselves driven to take into consideration a question of the gravest and most anxious character; — could the Germans be permitted to leave their arms behind them with the Russians, to afford them the means of self-defence? Probably the honourable member's socialist friends in that country would have been sorely in need of them, to be able at least to meet force with force.

The question was a most difficult one. In principle, we were all of one mind about it. But how were we to arrange for the handing over of the arms, through what agencies, individual or collective, and to whom? For there was good reason to fear that the Germans might hand them over to one section only of the population, the section whose cause they exclusively championed.

Well, the question was so grave, so difficult, that there was no coming to a decision on it, as ways and means to carry it into execution could not be discovered: — and so, there ended our discussion of it in our last conference at Versailles.

## The policy of the Government.

So much, then, as to these grave and important special questions, I proceed now to deal with the general lines of our policy, as indicated in the Government statement of which I have so lately been the mouthpiece to you. The criticisms it has evoked from a number of speakers, — (the House will excuse me if I do not make more than this comprehensive reference to the various honourable members I have to reply to, — from Signor Turati, who opened the debate, and Signor Enrico Ferri, down through the whole list till, with this evening's debate, it closes with the speech of Signor Treves), — these criticisms, I say, may be summed up as the expression of a feeling of disappointment, caused by the silence of the Government at this grave hour on the problems that are of most vital importance. Well, allow me to say at once and most emphatically, that in my judgment, such a charge, such a criticism, as this, is without justification, if in reading that document, — the Government statement I mean of course, — you consider the spirit that prompted it. The words chosen to convey its meaning may have seemed, — nay, may actually have been, — inadequate: but the statement itself, in my judgment, is not so, if you consider the spirit of it in the light of the entirety of the political and international situation at the present moment.

« You », — an honourable member Signor Enrico Ferri told us, — « when confronted by definite problems which a Government prompt to be up and doing would at an hour like this have set itself to solve, — you have preferred to adopt negative and procrastinating formulas: — you have not laid before us a definite programme of action. » The honourable member is mistaken, Gentlemen. His mistake may be due to my wording of our statement, but most assuredly not to the proposals or the intentions or the action of the

Government. But to this poor text of mine I have no wish or intention to make a commentary, as though it were a *terzina* in Dante.

I have indicated briefly in synoptical form, as the brief limits of the statement imposed upon me, — (and even then in my judgment it was somewhat lengthy), — the whole plan of operation of the Government. And that I did so was precisely one of the reasons why, submitting myself unprompted by any to the duty of sincerity and political honesty, — (and here I know no repentance), — and finding myself confronted by tasks so formidable, tasks allowing of no delay, urgent, insistent, pressing ever upon us for their accomplishment, I moderated what might otherwise have been the soaring flight of loftier thoughts, pointing to more daring reforms.

Still, I laid before you, compendiously as I have said and as the limits imposed upon me by such a statement necessitated, a vast plan of operation; and this programme of ours, which I could only give you a summary of, a rapid sketch with hasty touches, was displayed before you as a finished picture, rich in colouring, in the exposition of it yesterday by my right honourable friend (Sig. Nitti), which was crowned by the House with such just and well-merited applause.

Well, do the honourable members who were pleased to contradict and censure me, mean to tell us that this programme is not worthy of the solemn hour it is now our lot to be traversing?

But a word more on this head, The mistake these honourable members have made, possibly owing to some faulty wording on my part, is this: — they have failed to realize that those mental reservations which I observed, though after all only partially, in the Government statement, had reference to matters quite other than they have imagined. They had reference to matters on which these honourable members have been at least as reserved as I have; for they are matters which nobody can accuse one either of excess

of pride or excess of modesty for asserting to be probably, nay certainly, past the wit of any one man to grasp and master.

Now my sense of the grave import of all this new life that is now opening out before the world, was so profound, that I refrained from bringing into relief even those reforms which Government has already decided to effect, and which await only the technical definition needed to clothe them in formal language; and this too I hope will be done even in the brief space left us before the close of the session of Parliament.

There is, for instance, as you heard from my right honourable friends. Signor Ciuffelli, and (later on) Signor Nitti, the insurance against sickness and old age of all the labouring classes, there is the much talked-of scheme for pensions to the working-classes, — vast reforms these, enough in themselves in ordinary times to justify the existence, nay to be the glory, I will not say of a Ministry merely, but of a whole cycle of Ministries, and which I now announce here before this House as measures already decided on by the Government (*Loud and general applause*), but which I most assuredly have not the very slightest intention of presenting before you as the solution, the summary, the conclusion of this immense historic catastrophe by which the world has been overwhelmed. (*Hear, hear!*)

Then there is the question of the South. It has been once more raised in this House, in the course of this debate. And need I say how my heart responds to the appeal, — I who never forget that I am the son of that Land of the South which is ever so dear to me, and to which I am bound by such strong ties, no one among them all, I would add, weakening one hair's-breadth those other ties that link me to the great Motherland common to us all. (*Cheers.*)

Great is that Land of the South, great, — and noble its people. I am not thinking now of the contribution of that people to the war, without limit and without reward (*Loud and general applause*), but more

than this and more than all, — (grant me here one word of pride in that Sicilian land that gave me birth), — of the wonderful proofs it has given of the spirit of order and of discipline. (*Loud cheers.*)

Among that people there were no neutralists, no interventionists. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*) No need for them of excitants or of calmants, The call was made and they answered to the call. (*Loud cheers.*) It may be this was owing to the long-enduring influence of their thousand-year-old State-system; for that part of Italy never passed through the period of communal autonomy, glorious that too, I grant you, but was ever one sole State; and it was Roger, let me remind the honourable member (Sig. Enrico Ferri), that king whose body was discovered clothed in the gorgeous mantle of silk woven in the looms of Palermo, then the world-centre of the silk industry, as now are Milan and Lyons, — it was King Roger who placed on his own head the crown of Sicily, the only king in the Middle Ages who sought no sanction for it from Emperor or from Pope (*Hear, hear!*), founding thereby that kingdom of Sicily, which was to become later on the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, that later still was to be the Crown of Sardinia, and at the last, the Crown of Italy. (*Loud cheers.*)

Can I, then, forget how just are the claims this question of the South has upon our attention? The assignment of the sums to be allotted to the necessary reforms and the requisite public works must be made by estimates based on a just system of division (*Cheers*) among the various provinces; but the methods of expenditure must vary; for hitherto the form of State subvention that has prevailed in Italy, — (not of course from any fault of the North: to accuse the North would be as irrational as it would be mean and petty,) — the form of State subvention that has prevailed in Italy has been of aid to her Northern Provinces, but of little or no advantage to her Southern.

For in the North, where it found the local authorities active and energetic and capable of making good use of it, it enabled the public works it was voted for to be carried into execution. But amongst us in the South, where all such co-operation on the part of local bodies in the communes was altogether wanting, merely to give the subvention meant practically to give nothing at all. (*Cheers.*)

This question of our Southern Provinces leads me naturally to speak of the Land Question, which has been brought before us by a number of speakers in this debate, commencing with my honourable friend Signor Abisso, who most justly reminded us that in looking after the interests of the workmen engaged in our industries we must not forget those of the agricultural labourers, — and closing with the impassioned and fervent appeal, made you yesterday by my honourable friend, Signor Badaloni.

Well, Gentlemen, with the fullest consciousness of the gravity of my words, I assert that there is no one in all Italy who is more profoundly, more intensely appreciative of the Land Question than I am. No boldness in grappling with it can, to my mind, be overmuch: — and I believe I am no less audacious in respect to it than any other member here, whoever he may be, because it is my profound conviction that the most courageous, the most radical means of solving the problem is not to talk of expropriation in mass, which would mean simply passing the thing over from one hand to the other, degrading thus in the eyes of the new possessor all that immost worth which is conferred on it by the contribution to it of his own labour and his own exertions.

I believe that the development of a collective sense has already given us the means to reconstitute a collective domain (*Hear, hear!*), differing, however, profoundly from the old feudal domain, where the sparseness of population permitted vast *latifundia* to be reserved for the humblest and least intense forms



of culture; — while, on the other hand the domain of to-day, owing to that collectivity, in which to my mind stands revealed the true force of the society of future (*Hear, hear!*), may through collective purchase and individual activity, unite the advantages of large holdings with the advantages of small.

What I mean is, — a new collective domain may borrow from the system of small holdings the intensive, specialized, localized character of the labour, while by the union of these forces it may have also all that the system of large holdings has at its disposal, — the large granaries, the large means of culture, the possibility of large purchases and of large sales. (*Cheers.*) And the land, this kindly, generous, fertile land of Italy, is paymaster to all, has for all: — no need to wrest anything from any one: enough to ask her for more, and more she will give you.

This work we are already setting about: we have already a definite plan laid down, which we propose to carry out through the agency of that Institute of the Combatants, to which my right honourable friend, the Minister for the Treasury, referred yesterday before this House. We are already at work then. And we must go on working. (*Hear, hear!*) For I have the firmest conviction that there is nothing that is needed that must not be given to render possible the associated action of our peasantry in the direct culture of the land. (*Hear, hear!*) All this, let me tell the honourable member, (Signor Ferri,) was in my mind when I made those reservations, and he will now see that when I made them, partial (I repeat) as after all they were, it was to something quite different that I was referring.

### Italy and President Wilson's Principles.

And now let me say that nothing has surprised me more than the challenge addressed to me by several speakers from various parts of the House:

« Do you or do you not accept the fundamental principles of the Wilson programme? » Well if there is any one who still has doubts on this head, after the clear and explicit statements I have made, the only thing to be said is, that this time words have served me, like Talleyrand, to conceal my thoughts.

I imagined that I had accepted that programme in its most definite and most binding form. I said so, and I say so now once more.

The honourable member (Sig. Treves) could have done nothing, — I admit the courteous way in which he put it, but he could have done nothing that could pain me more just where my sensibility is most acute, — than by that allusion of his, not it is true directed personally against me, but against the whole party of us who willed the war and made it, — the suggestion. I mean, that, the Saint's day once over, they'd swindle the saint, — in other words, that the promises made would not be kept, and so a sort of colossal fraud would have been practised on the people, to keep up their courage and strength during the most tragic hours of the terrible struggle. I ask the honourable member to study my whole political career in the past and give me, if he can, a single promise I have not kept, a single pledge to which I have not been faithful. (*Cheers.*)

I was profoundly convinced, not on any grounds of political opportunism, but from a consciousness that was the outcome of all the human thought in my mind, all the human sentiment in my soul, — (I put it so, let me tell the honourable member, because I believe that to the sentiment of none, the soul of none can the epithet « human » be more fitly attributed), — I was convinced that the justification of this vast war was to be found at loftier heights than at any private or national stand-point, — in the conception of a great revolution in the history of Humanity.

I have already affirmed again and again, and I proclaim it once more this day: — the justification of

this war is to be found in something more than the mere satisfaction of national interests, sacred, legitimate as are these ; it is to be found in this mighty longing of suffering Humanity, — to secure that like horrors be not ever lived through over again in the future. (*Loud and general applause.*)

Not merely have I affirmed this principle, not merely have I accepted this formula ; but (pardon me if what I am about to say seems, as perhaps it is, an act of vanity : — it is a vanity that has the worth of a solemn confirmation of a pledge I have taken upon me) : — to this principle and to this formula I have striven to offer my contribution, bringing this into relief, that the question that lies at the heart of the systematisation of a Society of the Nations, more than a question of form is a question of soul and of spirit.

Forms have never had importance on the vitality of Right. It is the easiest thing in the world to be an Abbé Sieyès, who printed a new constitution every twenty-four hours, whenever Napoleon asked him for one. Far more important is the spirit that is to animate the institution : and I verified the existence of this collective consciousness, and made my appeal to it, because it is the true, the firmest, the most unshakable basis of this new type of social fellowship.

But a number of other questions present themselves. Two honourable members, Signor Pirolini and Signor Treves, press me hard, insisting : « We want something definite. Give us something definite about the fourteen points, especially about the four most important ones ». It is not, — let me tell these two honourable members, it is not that I wish to evade their questions, it is not that I wish to make them wait in vain for an answer ; but from the political and parliamentary point of view, speaking as I am before a political and parliamentary Assembly, at an hour like this, I really feel bound to point out that every one of these principles is so vast as to require such a lengthy

commentary that, if we are pass from their enunciation to their application, I should have to ask you to stay here a couple of months to get to the bottom of them.

This, however, is true of all principles. And it would be unjust, supremely unjust, to criticize on this ground Wilson's idea. It has sometimes been accused of nebulosity, of abstruseness, of an inconsistent ideality; but this is just what happens in the case of all principles; and the very same thing happened in the case of the Declaration of the Rights of Man. There is a great affinity between the two revolutions, just as there is between the two sets of words: — the principles of Wilson correspond to the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Now let me ask the honourable member (Sig. Treves) what would have happened, if he had wanted in those days to see how the following sentence was to be translated into practical application: — « All men are free and equal ». Well, at a moderate estimate, it has taken four thousand articles of the Civil Code, of civil procedure, of penal procedure and of the Commercial Code, to enable this pure and simple enunciation of principle to be applied completely to particular cases. (*Hear, hear!*)

These questions are exceedingly complicated; and the honourable member is quite wrong if he thinks I wish to evade them: on the contrary here is one I lay before him in what is surely all sincerity and all clearness by way of example, — the freedom of the seas. This, in principle, seems indisputable., But when we set about applying it, we find ourselves face to face with an entirely new codification of maritime international law. Take another example: — the question of free trade, of the abolition of those clauses, which made of the very treaties means of war in time of peace. Very well: we are agreed on this principle: but only consider what the difficulties are, and how endless, in the way of its application.

I will mention but one special case, merely to show the extreme delicacy of the question. Belgium comes

to us and says: «For four years production has been wholly barred to me; while during all this time, the Germans have gone on producing, filling their warehouses to overflowing and accumulating their stocks in reserve. Do you mean to abandon my market without defence to be inundated by these stocks produced in virtue of and as a consequence of the horrible violence I have been a victim of?» And so on, and so on: this and all such problems require for their solution in each special case the most exhaustive investigation; and besides, the very fact that they will have to be submitted to international discussion makes their discussion in a national Parliament, I do not say useless, — (no, a thousand times, no!) — but certainly less useful than may be the case with problems that have a range and import exclusively national.

### The peace conference.

The honourable member (Sig. Treves) has asked me, too, whether in this peace we shall apply the principle «Neither vanquished nor victors». (*Comments.*) I feel bound to inform the honourable member that this principle we shall not apply. («*Hear, hear!*» and *comments.*) Putting aside anything like mere retaliation which might engender a common hate, there is a vanquished, and he must be recognized as such. — (*Loud and prolonged cheers. Interruption by Signor Turati.*) And the vanquished, — his defeat cannot distress the honourable member (Sig. Turati), when I tell him the vanquished is the imperialistic spirit (*Cheers from all parts of the House*); so that Humanity is bound to take every precaution to ensure that never more through lurking ways he raise his head, — never! (*Cheers.*)

The honourable member (Sig. Treves) asked me: «In what spirit, with what intent, shall you go to the Peace Conference?»

The honourable member put me that question with the air of one who thought I should be terribly

embarrassed by it. (*Laughter.*) But my answer to his question is very simple. I hold that I should go to that Congress in the spirit of an Italian (*Loud cheers*) who has learnt all the lessons of all the history we have watched unfolding before us during this period, which is not the close of an era, and is not the beginning of another, but is verily a whole era in itself. (*Hear, hear !*) And this same principle will be our guide no less, in all that touches the questions of national interest.

Italy entered into war with a clear vision of the enormous import of this war: and this, be it said to our honour. And in making this assertion, there is no vanity, no vaunting: still less am I seeking thereby a justification to serve as answer to any personal attack or to win my pardon for aught in an hour so solemn. (*Hear, hear !*)

Believe me, Signor Treves, my pride will never prevent me from asking pardon of any one, though indeed, in this instance, there is nothing to ask pardon for.

I repeat: we shall go to the Conference in the spirit and with the sentiments that are Italian. Italy, as I have just said, entered into this war with a clear vision of this war's enormous import. Of course, it would be puerile to assert that, so long ago as that, from the very beginning, we foresaw the fall of Russia, the intervention of Wilson and his principles, the collapse of Prussian militarism, and the evolution of the German people. It would be a base and lying vaunt if we claimed for ourselves the prevision of all these events. But as to our own Country, I can justly affirm that she had a vision of what this war must needs bring with it from the point of view of the destinies of Humanity; for it is the truth (and we do well to repeat it) that the feeling of horror inspired in us by the overbearing insolence and violence wreaked on Belgium had a part in urging us to the gigantic strife at least as great as other aims, which,

be they ever so noble and worthy, were of interest special and peculiar to ourselves. (*Loud cheers.*)

Italy would have justice for all. It is but natural that she should claim it for herself. (*Cheers.*) But that this she wills, is a reason more not to imagine that Italy means to oppress others or to load others with the weight of imperialistic aims which are repugnant to her spirit and would be against her interests rightly understood. And a reason more, I assert, to forbid the belief that in Italy lurk schemes of oppression against any, is this, too, — to remember that in this House was proclaimed all the sympathy of Italy for the peoples oppressed by Austria; and it must not be forgotten that the moment when the minister of Italy, rendered great by the soul, the will, the force, of a whole great people in whole-hearted union behind him, made this declaration, was precisely the moment when Count Czernin was informing us that we must prepare ourselves never to have restored to us our invaded provinces, save after paying the price of our betrayal and after surrendering besides other strategic points that would have held us fettered as, nay more than, before? It was the moment, that, I remember, when the Minister of Italy answered: « Rather than that, . . . till they drive us back to Sicily ! » (*Cheers*), and at the same hour we raised the cry of liberation to the peoples oppressed by Austria.

We have nought to change now, of the purposes we made known then. Then we were just after Caporetto: now we are at Trieste by virtue of our arms. (*Loud and prolonged applause, taken up in the galleries. All the members spring to their feet with cheers for Trieste.*)

Why may not, then, dissensions and difficulties be composed? Many who speak of our affairs without knowledge of them, — (*veniam damus petimusque vicissim*, for too often we too speak of others' affairs without full knowledge of them), — have not reflected that those international agreements, which have been represented by some as the proofs of our aggressive

imperialism, are, on the other hand, essentially a compromise. A compromise: for what else can they be termed, when in virtue of these agreements Italy spontaneously renounced a city incontestably Italian? (*General applause. Cheers for Fiume.*)

I should be sorry if your applause carried you further than the thought that was in my mind in what I have just stated.

I have said that Italy recognizes, in certain conjunctures, the need to avoid not only the substance but even the shadow of anything like masterfulness and violence (*Hear, hear!*): that Italy recognizes the need of compromise. (*Hear, hear! and comments.*) Italy had already spontaneously made this clear...

Signor MARCHESANO — There is the Treaty of London.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL — It is not right, then, it is not just, to blame us for not having realized one whit the needs of the new era now dawning before us. Even if I had proclaimed nothing but this programme of international order, I should have affirmed what, if we attain it, — (and I have a firm faith that we shall), — would alone suffice, let me tell the honourable member (Sig. Treves), to justify the war, even with its six millions of dead. It is not we who rule the destinies of the world. And if it be true that certain great redemptions cannot be wrought save through blood, we must needs bow before that law, however our hearts may be rent by it. (*Cheers and various comments.*) No other way was left us, that violence might be for ever warred down and Justice triumph.

But spite the brevity necessarily imposed on me in the Government statement, I did not confine myself to this sole consideration. On the contrary, so far as the scanty limits inherent to such a statement permitted me, I set myself to place in the true light the various and multiple phases of the international problem



presented us in the financial question, the economic, and the military.

All these varied activities of the spirit of man, I pointed out, were linked together in monstrous wise where reigned our enemy. To mingle them into one was the work of a violent and brutal force, which lowered over all the other peoples as a perpetual menace of their overthrow and of the stifling out of their existence, And against this menace, which had in view the crushing down and stamping out the liberties of all the peoples, there was no shield, no shelter save war; and to war all the peoples have been under the necessity of sacrificing themselves, that liberty might be saved, liberty the most sacred of all things.

Before the new, great, immense problems the war has given rise to, a time came when, I must confess, I stood perplexed; for, let me tell the honourable member (Sig. Enrico Ferri), I felt that my intellect was all too weak in comparison with them.

But obviously I had not the good fortune to make myself understood; for the honourable member has come down here to teach me that the new times ought to have opened my eyes; — to see what? Well he indicated to me the question of the South, better road-communication and land-reclaiming: — all three assuredly most important questions; but their beard, as the saying is, did not grow yesterday: they have been common talk to me from the day I first set foot within these walls.

It is our duty all this; and of course we ought to do it; but he will not tell me we have made the war to discover the question of the South, or the road question, or the question of land-reclamation. And hence it is that I stand hesitating and perplexed, all respect before the vastness of the problem. And this attitude was mine for a less exalted reason too, for a reason, I had almost said, that appeals more sensibly to this House, when we take into consideration the position of the House itself and of the Government.

## The historic legislature.

Assuredly — (and I say this to its praise) — the work of this Assembly is done, and it has been a great work.

It will live as one of the greatest among the Legislatures of our parliamentary history, and (surely of good omen this) it is the first chosen by universal suffrage.

But its task is exhausted, not only and not so much on the formal ground that its term, extended though it has been, has expired, but for a reason more essential, because the events we have lived through have surpassed us all (*Hear, hear!*), because here we are but as shadows. (*Comments.*) This very perplexity, this very hesitation, this forming of new groups, this breaking up of old ones, and this standing of some of us dubious here and here between the yea and nay of contrary opinions (*Laughter*), all these marks of uncertainty, instability, want of decision, cannot but be highly significant.

This perplexity is in the nature of things. Do you see what is happening in England, the venerable mistress of all liberties? While I speak, the elections are going on there, and at the nucleus of control at the centre you hear them saying: « Let us maintain after the war the coalition made for the war ». And there are free-traders who assent to this and free-traders who hold aloof from it; Unionists who assent and Unionists who hold aloof; Liberals who agree to it and Liberals who do not. All this, then, is in the nature of things.

Why do we lower ourselves by mutual accusations, by personal attacks, by petty gossip that belittles everything and degrades everything? (*Cheers from all parts of the House.*)

Yes, we have been surpassed by events. And we have the political honesty to feel this, and to proclaim it.

This House, I repeat, has had and has the consciousness that the heroic grandeur of these events has overpassed it.

All must be made new, and in this I am far from wishing to say anything ungracious; for I hope that all the members I see before me, all of them, may be found here when the new House meets. I for my part, have my conscience clear, I say it with pride, absolutely clear, of having in such grave times given a Prefect any instructions whatsoever to support or to oppose any one soever, disturbing thus the grandeur of the events unfolded before us by miserable election intrigues. (*Cheers.*)

There will come a new Assembly, new even if those who sit in it are unchanged, for it will have been in contact with this new people.

For they will come back to us, those four or five millions of men, who have lived the rude life of war and have been in contact, intellectual and moral, with other peoples.

We have Italians at Archangel and Vladivostock, Italians who have fought in Belgium and in France, and they have been great. In a city, not in Italy, which I will not name, there were troops of ours and other nations', and the order came of civilian evacuation. The citizens got their belongings together, locked up their houses, and handed over the keys — to whom? To the Italians. (*Loud cheers.*)

They will come back: it is they who are really the victors, it is they who have really the right to point out the way. Who is there in this House who can grasp it all? Who is he, wherever he sits, on the Extreme Left or elsewhere, who has wisdom to estimate our war or power to underestimate it?

The right to estimate it is theirs, theirs only. (*Loud cheers.*)

And the Gouvernement, what of it? Had I been given to obtain the slightest sign of the feeling of the House, I should have believed, (and assuredly I should

not have erred), that its work, too, is done. Its work is done, a work so formidable that the men who have toiled and suffered and joyed as we have this year, might well intone the canticle of the aged Hebrew, when he prayed to be let depart in peace after having beheld the glory of the Lord. Yes, we would say and we can in a certain sense, nay *ought* to say to the Country: « Now let Thou Thy servants depart in peace, for their eyes have seen Thy salvation » (*Loud cheers*); but so long as need be, we shall go on to do our duty. (*Loud, general and prolonged applause, taken up in the galleries. Cheers for Orlando and for Sonnino. A crowd of Members hurry to congratulate the Minister.*)

## FOR THE GREATER ITALY TO BE

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*Before the Senate, Dec. 15th, 1918*

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Signor V. E. ORLANDO, President of the Council — The exordium, now almost a thing of course, with which the speaker when he rises, is wont to recommend himself to the kind attention of his hearers, but which would in no other case be justifiable, coming from me to you, — (so many and so great are the proofs of the kindness you have always honoured me with), — this exordium is justifiable to-day for a purely physical reason, the state of my throat, as must already be patent to you from the very first words I have spoken.

Well, I will speak as I can, and with what voice I can.

And if only for this reason, I shall not enter into the discussion of those special points that have been raised during a debate that has been no less weighty than worthy and dignified.

• My right honourable friend, the Minister of the Treasury, Signor Nitti, in his magnificent speech, — (let me be permitted to say so much, though between members of the same Ministry the epithet may be taxed with want of taste), — my right honourable friend has already replied to some speakers and has asked to be pardoned if he has not been able to dwell on this or that special matter referred to in the debate. And this same pardon I must ask on a still larger

and more comprehensive scale, just as it is more comprehensive too, the task that is mine to discharge.

Still, I assure all the speakers to whom no special answer has been supplied, that their arguments and their suggestions will be given the most careful consideration by the Government, especially all that has reference to two problems really vital to our Country, the problem of the land and the problem of the South, the latter of which has been dealt with in such a noble spirit of national solidarity by Senator Pellerano.

It is my wish, in what I am about to say to-day, to sum up the matter under debate; for the great advantage of parliamentary discussion is precisely this: that the whole people virtually takes part in our debates with its ideas, its opinions, its sentiments, which therefore here find their comprehensive and conclusive expression.

Now we have learnt much from this debate, and it has really been a *felix culpa*, a beneficent contrariety, that from *force majeure* a certain time has elapsed between the sittings of the elective Chamber and those of the Upper House. I really believe that from the debate that has taken place in this hall, a debate permeated throughout by the fervid spirit of patriotism that animates this Assembly, — (so that here in very truth nothing is subordinated to any party interest, and thus discussion may really and effectively be collaboration), — I believe we have learnt from it the most valuable lessons, and it would be well that they should be blazed abroad far and wide among our people. And I would fain make appeal to what of trust the people of Italy have found themselves able to place in my words, — draw on this capital of mine, so to speak, created out of pure passion for my Country, and never to be employed by me save in my Country's interest, — I would fain, I repeat, have this new exhortation of mine now accepted, just as those other exhortations of mine were accepted in the past, in hours of darkest anguish.

## Moral forces and spiritual energies.

Briefly, then, Gentlemen: — we have all yielded somewhat, — (it is excusable in all of us, or at all events, if any are blameworthy, I am content to be placed among the number), — we have all yielded to that natural feeling of being freed from an incubus, which followed the cessation of hostilities owing to our glorious victory. We have yielded to an impulse of psychological simple-mindedness, the most natural, it is true, in the world: the victory is ours, the scourge of destruction and of death is still: we are in peace then, we can then take up once more the burden each bears of his occupations and his pre-occupations, the problems and aspirations of ordinary times, we can begin another life, we can return, that is to say, to the life that was ours in time of peace.

Well, Gentlemen, we have fallen into a grievous error; and this is why I said that from the discussion that has been collaboration in this House, we have learnt a most valuable lesson. No, Gentlemen, the time is not come for us to demobilize our souls and spirits. Our first duty is still to be in heart and soul and sense what we were during the months of war. We, if I may be allowed the comparison, are like a ship which after completing a long and perilous voyage, after overcoming the most terrible tempests, finds herself not merely in view of the harbour, but actually on the point of making her way into it. But ere she can enter there, she has still one manœuvre to execute, which waves and currents, winds and rocks and shoals make hard indeed, so that the ship may haply be wrecked at the very harbour's mouth. (*Hear, hear!*)

My right honourable friend, Signor Nitti, has well explained to you with that special incisiveness which is the property of the empiric method, what I would represent under this form of analogy or parable, — the immediate difficulties we have to contend with.

Thank Heaven, it is difficulties I am speaking of now, not as before of risks and perils, where it is a question of life or death, to be or not to be: — but as to the difficulties we have to overcome, they are not at this moment diminished, but rather, maybe, increased.

You have been told of the victualling difficulties owing to the considerable increase of the population to be provided for, of the financial difficulties, the political difficulties, the economic difficulties: — and all this when we have no longer those means whereby, be they never so artificial, the various collective organisations are held together in time of war, nor those whereby, be they too never so artificial, wealth finds brisker circulation, and above all, (though this is a force which it is in our power not to let escape us), when we have no longer that over-exaltation of the whole being, which in the face of exceptional danger rallies, mobilizes all its energies to affront it. (*Hear, hear!*)

Well, these moral forces, these spiritual energies, we can and ought — (this costs nothing; so my right honourable friend Signor Nitti will have no hours of affliction on this score), — we can and ought to call them up again in us: for at the moment of facile confidence that the hour of difficulties and dangers was past and gone, we had, I might almost say, to use the fashionable phrase, demobilized them. And the various applications of this truth have been laid before you in all fullness by my right honourable friend, the Minister of the Treasury (Signor Nitti). I, on my part, will give you yet one more instance. It concerns the agitation among the employees of the State, which was made the special subject of his remarks by Senator Maggiorino Ferraris, who stated the problem with that incisive plainness which makes him an orator worthy to compare with the very best English models.

He stated it thus: « Let us look into the matter. What we have to do is, to decide whether they are



wrong or whether they are right. If they are wrong, then say so plainly: if they are right, do for them what in such case should be done ». Not so, let me tell the honourable Senator. For, even before entering upon this enquiry, perfectly just though it be in itself, I am conscious of that which bids me pause and say: « The time is not yet ».

I have not failed to recognize the great debt of gratitude the functionaries of the state have earned for themselves during the course of this war. They have been heroes indeed, — heroes in action, heroes in suffering. But they like the rest of us have yielded to the feeling of liberating impatience I have just been alluding to, and so they are agitating and saying: « So long we have suffered, we have toiled, we have given endless proofs of abnegation and of sacrifice; but now the hour is come for a radical investigation into our position ».

Now to these functionaries, who are so dear to me, — (I will not again to-day pronounce the eulogy of the bureaucracy, as I have done, nor once only, in the past; because only yesterday this hall rang with yet another most eloquent eulogy in their honour, and they see and know full well what sympathy and solidarity is in my heart to link me to them), — to these functionaries I will not address a single harsh word, for they are far from meriting it. I have the fullest sympathy with the modern conception of our relations. The time has gone by, in my opinion, for the traditional idea of an authority rigidly formal. On the contrary, I hold that, as between friends, we can and ought to talk over their situation with these functionaries of ours. And so I may remind them, and they too of course remember, that the present Government, the Government over which I have to honour to preside, has made unasked, and that in the most trying hour the Italian State has ever experienced, a reform in their economic condition, to which it would be hard to find a comparison in any reform

previously effected. But be their tenor what it may, the value of the concessions made lies above all in this, their spontaneity, which has a price and value that can hardly be overestimated; because it shows what is my feeling and the feeling of all my colleagues towards them.

Well, then, to these functionaries of ours I say — (and they, I am quite sure, will understand why,) — I say without one single word of threatening or of reproof: «Wait: wait still: wait above all for economic reasons».

Nothing can be truer than that remark of the honourable Senator Maggiorino Ferraris: «The salary is to be measured by the cost of living». Now do we know the *ubi consistam* of the various prices, which together determine the cost of living at this moment? The honourable Senator Rolando Ricci, whose authority in these matters I so fully recognize, infused a gleam of hope into my soul, when in the calculations he made as to prices, he came to the conclusion that, at least in the case of the articles he was referring to, it was beyond all controversy that they would return to their *ante bellum* limits. Well, I would gladly believe it, I would gladly persuade myself of it; but I cannot feel perfectly sure of it. Any more than I cannot help, on the other hand, feeling perfectly sure that the total cost of living assuredly cannot remain at the fantastic heights it has at the present time attained. Well where midway shall we arrive at last? Where will it be, this *ubi consistam*? Where shall we find the touchstone for the application of this test, which Senator Maggiorino Ferraris so rightly urged us to apply?

Then, too, apart from the economic difficulties, there is further the question of precedence; for, if I may be allowed so to put it, there is a protocol-book of the economic and social questions we have to face and determine. And this the Italian civil servants, I am perfectly sure, will understand, from the sense of

patriotism they have so admirably exhibited during the war. It was impossible to hear without emotion what in Paris, in London, at the International Conferences, the Allies said of the miracles wrought in Italy with our railway stock. And remember we can never repeat too often what was said by my right honourable friend (Sig. Nitti,) — that when we make comparisons, we must bear in mind what are the means at our disposal in comparison with others. I repeat, then, that all the functionaries of Italy of every branch — and the railway officials in particular — have shown themselves and really are admirable. Well, these admirable functionaries of ours will, no doubt, understand that if there are measures the Government of Italy is more immediately called upon to take, if in short — (to use an expression that is certainly not felicitous, though it has been the heading of some articles in the newspapers, an expression which is certainly not very appropriate or in the best of taste and savours of the epigrammatic), — if in short we are to speak of a prize of victory, then all must agree with me that the first claim on our action in this matter is with the soldiers of Italy, to whom before all is due our victory. (*Loud cheers.*) And in answer to the impassioned speech of Senator Giardino, I hereby confirm the promises made by my colleague at the Treasury and assure the House that the very first task the Government has set before it — (and it is my pride here to lend my personal aid) — is to take measures with all possible speed with the view, I will not say to pay the debt of our gratitude to our soldiers, — (for that is a debt that we can never pay), — but still at least to prove to them that Government, Parliament and Country are devoting to them all their care and all their love. (*Loud cheers.*)

## National claims and international interests.

Coming now to the questions of international order, the Senate will appreciate the reasons which forbid the Government to enter too much into details: and this, not in the least owing to that system of secrecy in diplomacy, which we hope we are now going beyond, if Wilson's principles, so cordially adhered to by us, end by prevailing. Still, even if diplomatic secrecy is to be treated as a thing of the past, it is obvious that no matter what type of diplomacy is in question, it will never be opportune to discuss previously in public, before an assembly, what is still privately under discussion between members of Governments. This, is, of course, simply to observe the rule which obtains in the relations between private individuals, assuming, that is to say, that they are gentlemen. But there is a second reason, in my opinion even weightier than the first. It has already been referred to, though in another connection, by the honourable Senator Tittoni, in his lucid and effective speech, — I mean, when, referring it is true to one special question only, the question of the Levant and its settlement, he most justly pointed out that the satisfaction of the rights and aspirations of Italy was in a way dependent on certain principles of a general nature, which at the Peace Conference might or might not find acceptance.

« I cannot », he rightly said, « come here with an absolute programme; 'Italy should have this, that or the other.' The decision here is in inseparable relation with certain principles which may or may not find acceptance ». « All I demand » — he went on, and with perfect justice, « all I demand is, that the principles that find acceptance be fairly applied to Italy ».

Now we may transfer this argument from the particular question to which the honourable Senator applied it, to the whole mass of problems and deba-

table matter that will come under discussion at the Peace Conference: — and the more so as this time the Powers that will sit round the table there have proclaimed and accepted those principles owing to which the traditional rules that used to obtain at the settlement of such matters must needs be profoundly transformed or reformed.

This question then, of the general rules to be laid down, which the honourable Senator (Tittoni) applied to a particular case, has, as we see, a bearing far wider and far more profound; the principles President Wilson has promulgated, the principles of ideal justice, these are the principles we have accepted and proclaimed, ennobling ever more and more the objects of our war, till we have elevated them to an ampler vision of a different, a more civilized, a juster organisation of Humanity. To these principles it is our intention to keep faith: — but to what point, to tell the truth, I can at this moment neither myself foresee nor tell the House. This is not, and it would be absolutely unjust to believe it is, a reservation which conceals the fraudulent intention to apply in this case the vulgar saying «The Saint's Day once over, they swindle the Saint», and to disown the ideals of liberty and justice we have proclaimed, now that there is no longer need to keep up the hearts of our peoples striving in the war. No, that would be too base! What we mean in this is simply that these principles to which we have professed and profess the most profound respect, cannot but be tempered and co-ordinated, in their practical application, with certain necessities, certain complex exigencies of real life, which cannot be ignored and ought not.

Take, for instance the typical case of Belgium.

One of President Wilson's principles refers to commercial warfare. It forbids custom-house barriers, forbids the wares of one nation to be excluded while another's are allowed to be imported in excessive quantities.

But in the case of Belgium, which for four years has been unable to produce any wares at all, because she has been subjected to the most crushing, overwhelming violence recorded in story, because the Germans have carried off her machinery and with this very machinery the German workmen have created a stock of manufactured goods, — can it be admitted for a moment that Belgium should be flooded with these goods, which would mean the continuance of her economic impotence for who can say how many years? This is but one example among many I might give to make you realize within what limits we may apply in practice the abstract principle I referred to just now. But there is one question which I hold most firmly is to be regarded independently of the adoption of this or that abstract principle, — a question that has already been referred to in this House, — the question of indemnification.

Here the principle adopted may be such as to render more ample or less the sum of the losses to be indemnified. One of Wilson's postulates forbids the war-indemnity in the traditional sense of the term; but on the other hand, it is unquestionable that losses should be indemnified that have been incurred in violation of the law of nations. Between these two extreme, indefinite limits, the conception remains of the principle of indemnity with more or less ample compensation; and one thing here is beyond all doubt, that whatever criteria of compensation and indemnity be adopted for the other belligerent nations, these same criteria should be adopted for Italy. (*Loud cheers.*)

This is beyond all doubt; and without entering into questions that would be otiose — (not in the least for the sake of diplomatic secrecy), — this standpoint of mine is in correspondence with the decisions so far arrived at by the allies in conference.

Every nation has begun by making a separate calculation of its own losses. Of course it is obvious that not all the losses our fellow-citizens the inhabitants

of heroic Venetia must have compensation for, are here in question. If, in such a case, there are communes destroyed by our guns, then from the point of view of the reconstruction of the wealth of the provinces invaded, it is absolutely unimportant to know whether the destruction has been due to Austrian guns or Italian. But from the point of view of the violation of the law of nations, it is quite another matter. Here we have to do with the formal national verification of losses in war caused by the enemy in violation of right, by violence, rapine, or other crime soever.

With all the speed I could, — for no such inquiries could commence till our territories were evacuated, — I have nominated a Commission presided over by the first magistrate of Italy, which is doing its work with admirable promptitude and energy; and I have good reason to hope that its estimate of the losses incurred will be made known at least as soon as the corresponding estimates on the part of our allies. But I can tell you more than this: in our last conference, the Conference of London I mean, it was decided by the Allies to establish a Joint Commission, whose duty it should be, not only to reduce to a single standard the estimates of the losses incurred by the several nations, but also to examine into the capacity of compensation of all the nations that formed part of the League against us, of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey. (*Hear, hear!*)

Here there is an indivisible solidarity, — solidarity of the injured, solidarity of the injurers, (*Hear, hear!*) — and this conception of solidarity not only results from a principle of right, ideally, essentially moral and insisting on that jointness of responsibility which crime brings with it, but has also its practical, tangible counterpart in facts, all the grievous consequences of which we Italians are feeling, — well not quite as abstract formulas. For our cities have been bombarded with special ferocity by German aeroplanes, our ships

have been sunk by German submarines; and at Caporetto, it was the Germans who, I think for the first time, made use of their latest invention of introducing among the various arms and special services of an army, — artillery, cavalry, infantry, commissariat, engineers and hospital corps, — the special service of the booty-corps, that came armed with boxes and bags! (*Loud cheers.*)

If I am to speak out my whole opinion on this matter, then I must say that it seems to me no sensible being can imagine that the mere dissolution of one of our enemies' States and its consequent division into several States constitutes any reason why its debt should be cancelled. (*Hear, hear!*) This would be too convenient a theory. And it would be extremely perilous, too; for Germany, for less than this, would break itself up into a half score of States.

I am not denying, nay I admit, that some of these new States may be able to produce such evidence of effective contribution to the common cause, as to render advisable and justifiable their exoneration from contribution to the compensation for our losses. But as the reason for such exoneration depends on a cause common to all the allies, it is but natural that the effects produced by it should be debited to the common fund, from which Italy will receive that share to which she is justly entitled. (*Hear, hear!*)

Several speakers who have taken part in this grand debate, have made themselves the eloquent interpreters of the national sentiment as it manifests itself in the determination that the immediate national ends for which Italy has waged war, shall be fully accomplished. Well, alien as I am to everything that savours of arrogance, aye and only too conscious of all the disproportion between the forces of individuals and the greatness of the task and of the responsibilities that weigh us down, still I dare to say that the men who sit on these benches have given such proofs of their passionate, absolute, heart-and-soul devotion to the



supreme interests of the Fatherland, that they can proudly affirm that so far as these sentiments are concerned, they may be equalled but not surpassed by any, (*Hear, hear !*)

And that same flame of passion which has animated us in other formidable hours, will inspire us too in this the decisive hour to our Country. Not, of course, that we shall be animated by that uncompromising spirit which, when called on to solve problems so complex, will look at them from one side only. Such a method as this can be permitted only to one who expresses but his own private opinion and takes upon him no responsibility. It is precisely because we would have no violence done to us, that we have no intention to use violence to others; — precisely because, animated as we are by a sense of profound confidence not only in the loyalty of our allies (to say merely this would be so superfluous as to seem positively out of place), but in their cordial friendship, a friendship cemented by the blood shed in common by the sons of the nations fighting in defence of a common ideal, we know we can count on an equal confidence on their part in us and feel sure that all those difficulties which the situation really brings with it will be happily overcome. (*Cheers.*)

But Senator Tittoni has called the attention of the Senate to other questions and grave ones, directly and largely affecting the interests of Italy. And in raising these questions I think the honourable Senator has rendered a service to the Government and to the Country, as undoubtedly they have the importance he attributes to them, — whether they be those referring to the question of the indemnity, or those referring to the equilibrium of influence in the Levant, or to the settlement of the Colonial question.

Without, then, entering into details, for the reasons I mentioned just now, I would assure the honourable Senator that the value of his opportune and useful observations on these questions is most fully appre-

ciated by Government: — indeed I may go further and say that the Government itself has already devoted to them the most anxious attention,

But when I said just now that the honourable Senator had rendered his Country a service in bringing into relief the gravity and importance of the questions he has referred to, I was looking at the matter from a different, a wider, a more general point of view.

### The Greatness of the victory.

Senators of Italy, —

I said on another occasion — and the words I then used have been courteously quoted by a member of this House (Senator Giardino), — that the greatness of the victory Italy has won is such that it surpasses our very faculties to grasp it, and makes it difficult for us to rise high enough to realize what that victory really means. (*Hear, hear !*) But this does not make it necessary, or right, or in accordance with the truth, to say that the victory in the world-war is the merit of Italy. No, the force needed to vanquish in a cause in which the destinies of Humanity were at stake, was such that the aid of all was necessary, the aid of none could alone be sufficient.

Assuredly the fortunes of the war would have been far other than they were, if Italy had not observed neutrality at its commencement. (*Hear, hear !*) Assuredly the fortunes of the war would have been other than they were, if Italy had not generously flung herself into the strife in the saddest hour for her Allies. (*Hear, hear !*) And assuredly the fortunes of the war would have been far other, if in eleven great battles on the Isonzo Italy had not prevented the army of Austria from reaping the fruits of its victories over Russia, if in the battle on the Piave Italy had not with her single force sustained and thrust back the

Austrian army's onset. And who knows how many months more might have endured the desperate and tenacious resistance of Germany, if the great victory of Vittorio Veneto had not shattered the Austrian army and hurried events to a conclusion? (*Loud applause. Cheers for General Diaz.*)

But no less assuredly the war would not have been won by the league of free peoples, if France had not stayed on the Marne the first invasion of her territory, if multiplying tenfold the traditional bravery of her sons France had not in the sanguinary battles of Verdun stayed the fresh invasion, if she had not found in her spirit *se magnifiquement* Latin those magnanimous forces, those prodigious resources, which not only enabled her to sustain the most terrible sorrows and the most sanguinary mutilations, but granted her to become the centre of the united organisation of the forces up to then dispersed, so that France the heroic, the noble, was as it were the banner of rallying around which thronged all the free peoples. (*Loud applause. Cheers for France.*)

And the war would not have been won, if England had not kept the freedom of the seas and blockaded our foe, and if with a phlegm and a tenacity truly typical of the traditional British character as it rises before us in the legend of the ages, she had not dreadless sustained the warfare of the submarines, aimed straight at her very heart, and if, feeling that all this, great as it was, was not enough, England, she that had inherited through so many generations the hatred of conscription, had not with splendid heroism vanquished this sentiment and created a mighty national army, and if this army had not done glorious deeds of war at the Dardanelles, and in France and in Italy and in Asia Minor, with prowess worthy of the most famous of the armies that boast the grandest military traditions. (*Loud and prolonged applause. Cheers for England.*)

And lastly the war would not have been won but

for the generous, noble and magnificent intervention of the United States of America (*Cheers*), who brought to it all the fresh resources of their industrial and financial organisation, bore to it all the wonderful practical spirit characteristic of the man of business: — (I said so once to one of America's sons, who came to see me, and his smile told me how my words were appreciated). It was in such spirit they brought to the war that prompt and sagacious insight, those qualities of tenacity and swift action, for which in business they are so conspicuous; but at the same time, rising to the loftiest and purest ideals, with a disinterestedness unique in story, they found the way to infuse a spirit of lofty morality wide as the world into the aims of this war, repeating too, under conditions of even greater difficulty, the miracle of the creation out of nothingness of an army that has yet so brilliantly fought and so valorously. (*Loud cheers.*)

And — may I not add? — the war would not have been won but for the co-operation of the smaller States, of the heroic Belgium, (*Loud cheers, taken up in the Galleries, including that reserved for the Members of the Lower House*), — but for the fidelity, the courage, the loyalty, with which they remained faithful to this great cause of Humanity, while their peoples were scattered, martyred, tortured, wellnigh submerged by the flood of invasion.

Senators of Italy, — when I said just now that the greatness of Italy's triumph surpassed our very imagination and that it needed an effort on our part to raise ourselves to its level, I had in mind the great revelation of their power made by the Italian people, power in arms, power in labour, power in chiefs and in soldiers, power in industrial organisation, power above all in that people's spirit of abnegation and of discipline. (*Hear, hear!*)

Italy is to-day in truth a great State, not in virtue of an indulgent diplomatic concession, but because she has revealed a capacity of action and of will that

in reality places her on a par with the greatest States of all past ages and of this. (*Hear, hear!*)

And this, to my mind, is the prime and chief aggrandisement of Italy, an aggrandisement that can be the subject of discussion around no Conference table, that cannot be disputed, or lessened, or taken from her. This is in very truth the beginning for Italy of a new cycle of story, when necessarily and inevitably Fate opens up before her in the civil arts of peace an era of greatness.

### To the people of Italy.

This then is my prayer, this my appeal to the people of Italy: that it raise itself once for all to take to itself the spirit and the will of a Great Power, and that it refuse therefore to suffer itself to be swayed tyrannically by the isolated vision of a single matter of debate, be it ever so important, be it ever so potent to awake in our hearts the pulsing of feelings legitimate, nay holiest of the holy. Let the people of Italy ponder, as is its right, as is its duty, the vital questions that most directly and nearly concern us; but let it not therefore forget or ignore that at this hour it is all Humanity that has its new birth, and that we have before us here not only economic and territorial questions which beyond doubt have for Italy an incomparable importance, but have besides the whole moral and political settlement of the world, to which Italy has both the will and the duty freely to bear her contribution of will and of thought. (*Cheers.*)

A fatal necessity, arising from a variety of reasons, a detailed analysis of which, however interesting, would exceed the time here at my disposal, for long decades fettered the policy of Italy within a limited and narrow range of ideas in all that concerned the great international problems, forced as she was to live ever in a state of alarm for what might happen to our prejudice on a frontier undefended against an

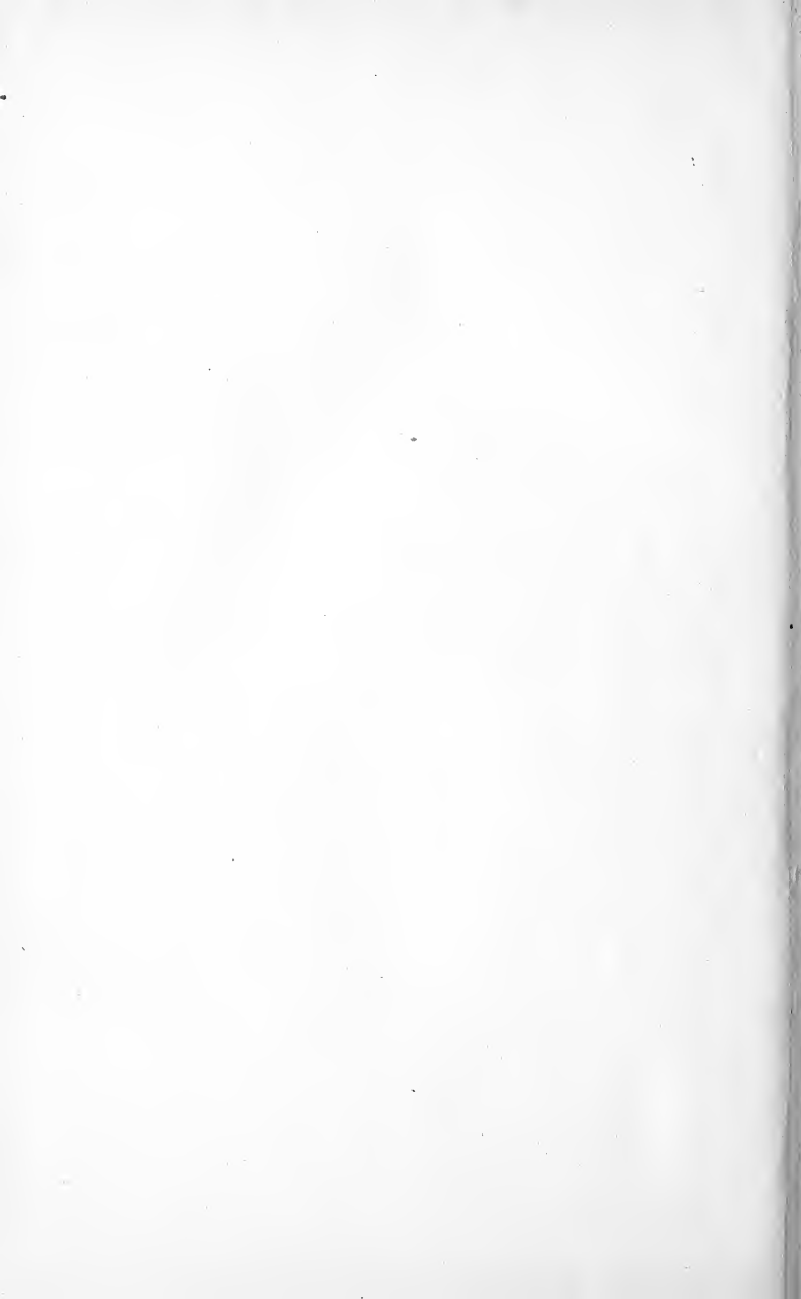
enemy we knew stronger than ourselves. Now that we have struck down this enemy, now that it will be given us as by our primordial right to close the doors round where we have our dwelling (*Loud cheers*), now begins for Italy the period of a complete international fellowship in such wise as to enable her to assert her interests wherever either economic or spiritual relations bring her into contact with the other peoples. (*Cheers.*)

Imperialism of any kind soever is foreign to this programme. The relations I have in mind are those of a free and fruitful rivalry of pacific action. But the essence of the matter in this, — that Italy be no longer absent from the field of high international politics, as in a large sense we may say that there is no one international question which does not directly or indirectly bear upon a just interest of Italy. (*Loud cheers.*)

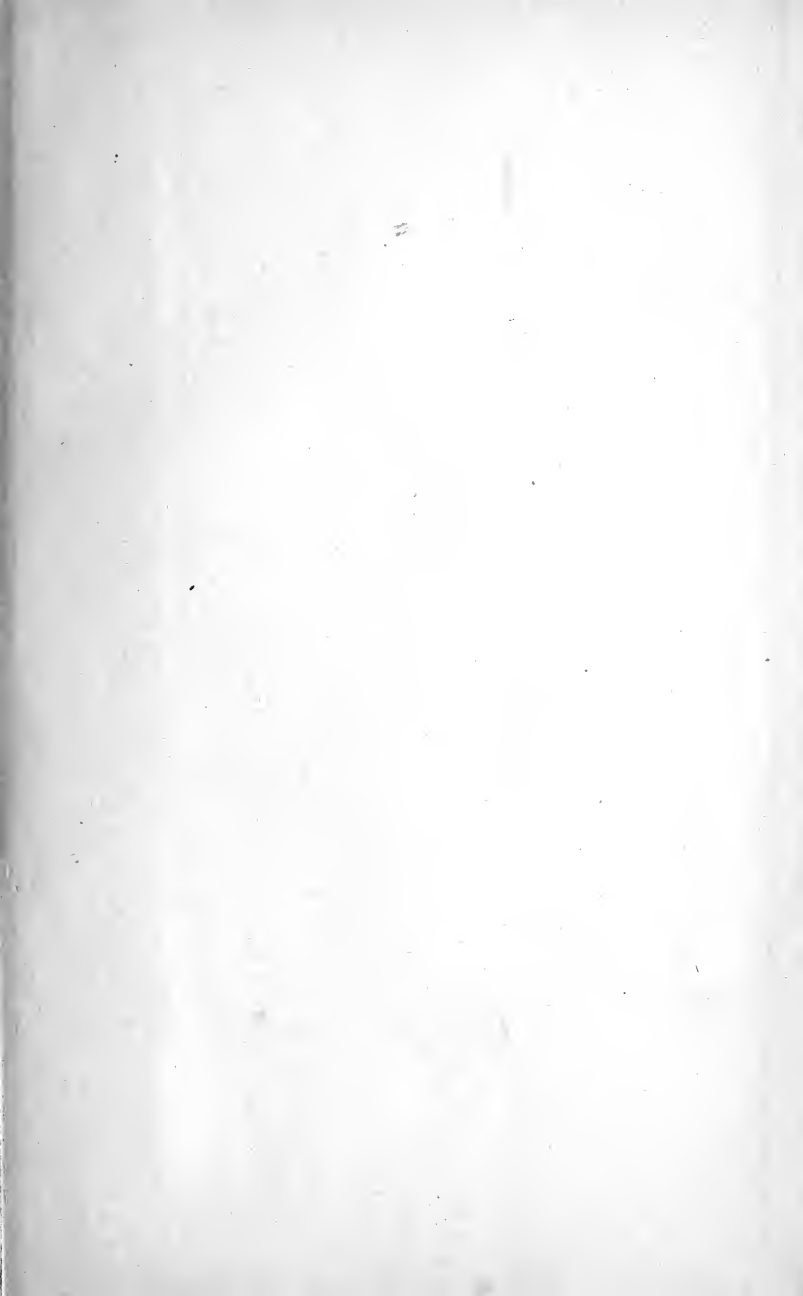
This is my fervent prayer as a Member of your Government and as an Italian. I trust that you, noble Senators, will confirm it with the sanction of your high approval, and that the people of Italy will know how to transform it into glorious reality. Our sons, who knew how to win for us this war, will know too how to open up for us the shining paths of peace. An incomparable treasure they have won for their Country by their sacrifices and by their blood. They will hand it on, I am full sure, as a sacred heritage to the generations to come. And on us to whom was given the great good fortune to see fulfilled this wonder, on us this day still smile for this adored, immortal Italy of ours the loftiest, the grandest, the most glorious hopes, if only in the future she have wisdom to labour in the world for progress and for civilisation. (*Loud and prolonged cheers. Ministers and Senators hurry to congratulate the speaker.*)

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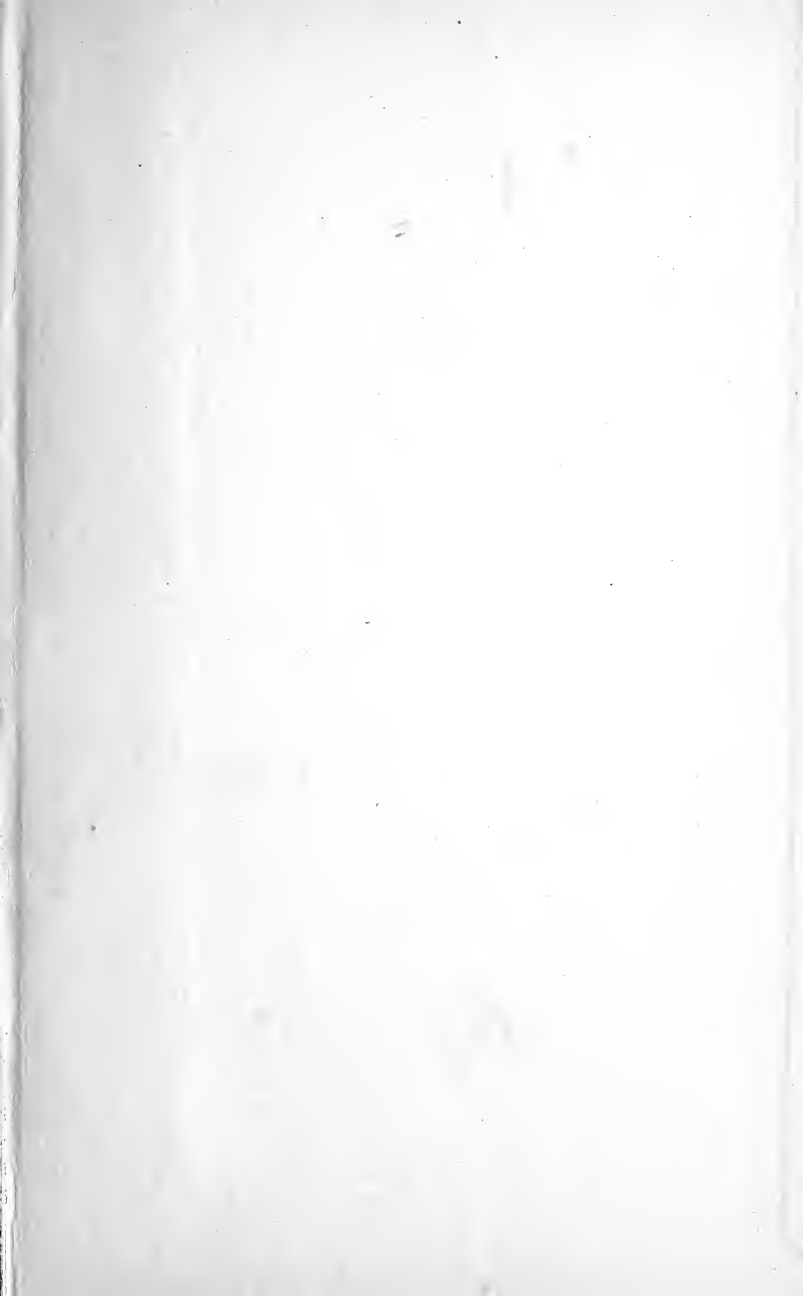












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